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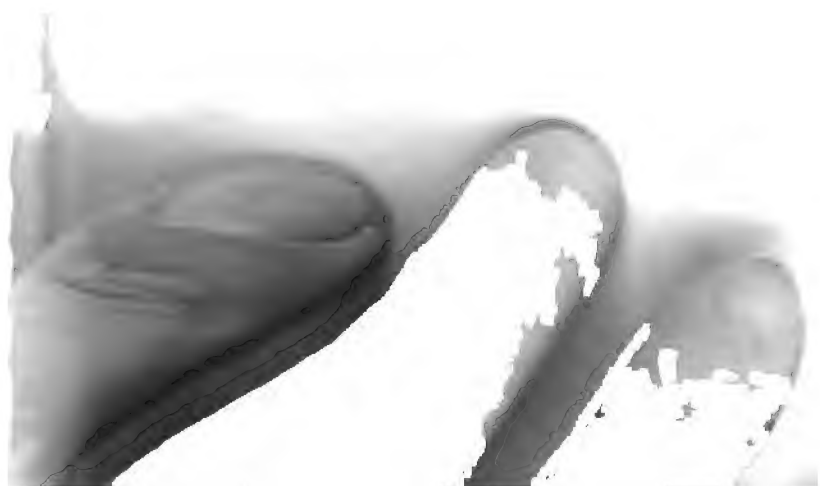
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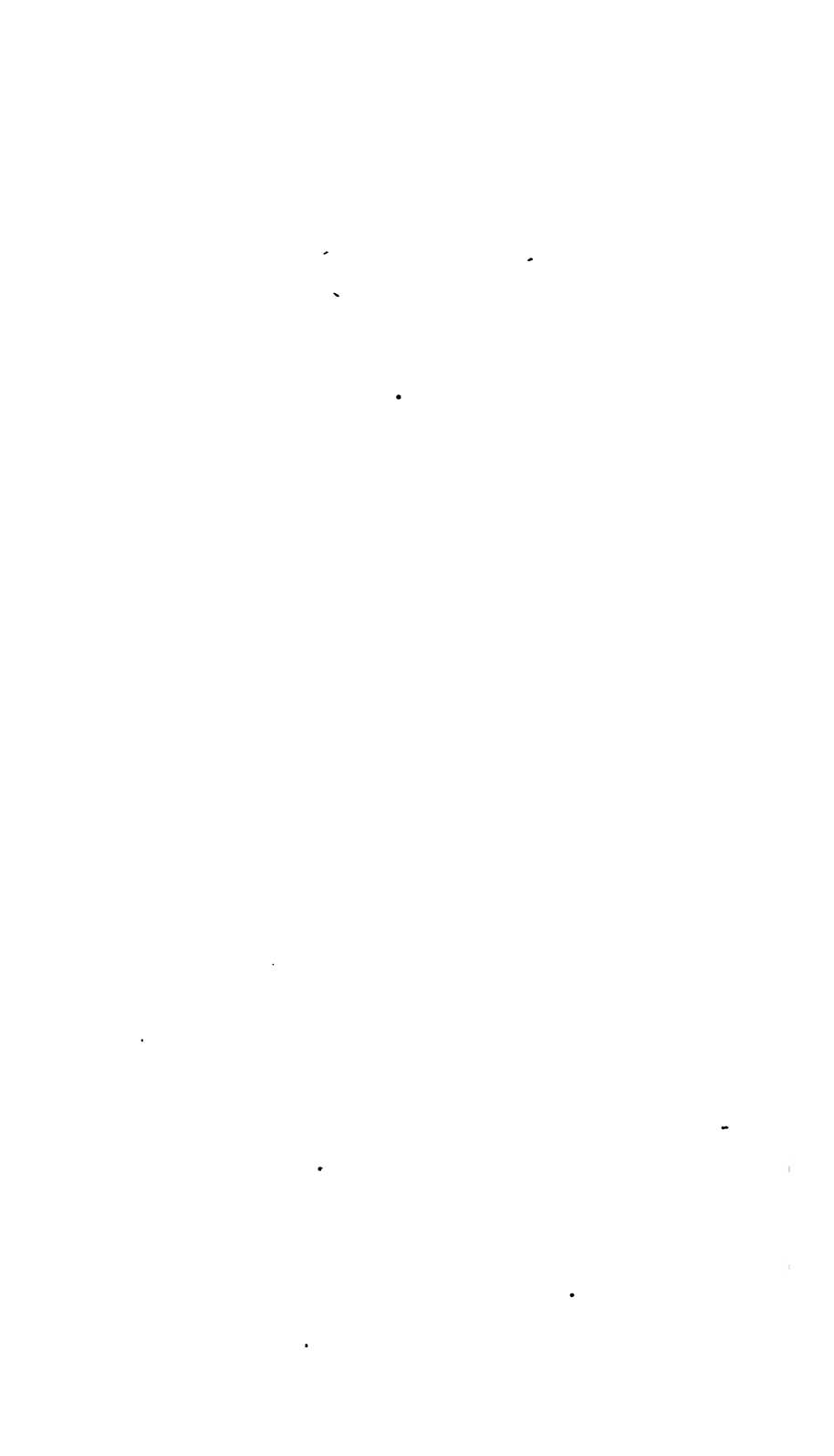


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L L E W E L Y N ' S H E I R ;

OR,

N O R T H W A L E S .



LEWELYN'S HEIR;

OR,

NORTH WALES:

ITS MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND SUPERSTITIONS.

DURING THE LAST CENTURY.

ILLUSTRATED BY

A Story Founded on Fact.

"I shall despair: there is no creature loves me:
And if I die, no soul will pity me."

RICHARD III.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
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London :
Printed by STEWART and MURRAY,
Old Bailey.

TO
HER FRIENDS IN NORTH WALES,

These Volumes

ARE DEDICATED
WITH FEELINGS OF AFFECTION AND GRATITUDE,

BY THE
AUTHORESS.



PREFACE.

NEARLY a century ago, Lord Lyttelton published "An Account of a Journey into Wales," in which he makes honourable mention of the beauty of the ladies of Bala, but does not name the men or manners of the principality : an omission that we have perhaps but little cause to regret ; for fifty years later we find the author of "Cambria Depicta" (who was a native of Ruthin, in the county of Denbigh) complaining in his preface, "that of the many volumes published under the appellations of 'Tours through North Wales,' all have invariably been found defective in their description of the people, their manners, and cus-

toms. Nor is this deficiency surprising, when we recollect that these descriptions have generally been undertaken by complete strangers to those people, their manners, and customs." These remarks we believe to be equally applicable to the "Tours in North Wales" of the present day; and an anxiety to offer to the world a true picture of the men and women of the "Land of Llewelyn,"—their customs, manners, and superstitions, as they existed, as many "an old man eloquent" will testify, in his boyish days—has induced the Authoress of these pages to lay them before the public. But as she feels, with Othello, "little shall I grace my cause in speaking of myself," she will only remark, that she would rather be accused of being to the failings of the Welsh "a little blind, and to their virtues very kind," than be reproached with having "to set down aught in malice" against a noble race.

LLEWELYN'S HEIR.

CHAPTER I.

"I love its sea-shore, and its mountains, and its white sea-mews, and its beauteous women."

It was a beautiful night, in the spring of the year of 1704, when a gaily dressed traveller, mounted on a Welsh pony, rode up to the door of the ferry-house, as it was by courtesy denominated (for hut would have been a much more fitting title), opposite Conway: he threw the bridle on the neck of the pony, and gazing earnestly around, asked of a man who followed close behind him if they had much farther to travel.

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"No, sir;" answered the person addressed. "You have only to cross the ferry, and you will be in Conway; and," he added with a grin, "I fancy you have heard worse news than that in your life, for you looked terribly frightened many times this evening, though it was getting duskish before we came to the highest part of the road, and you could not see the danger your neck was in."

"I looked frightened, and well I might; why a goat might have been pardoned had he tumbled, ah! and looked frightened too had he made one of our party," replied the youthful traveller in a good-humoured tone; "but," he added, "knock up the people at the ferry-house, as you are pleased to call this miserable looking dwelling, for I am anxious to get to Conway."

The man, who acted in the double capacity of guide to the traveller and post-boy, slung his letter-bags across his shoulders, and opening the unbolted door of the hut, disappeared, nor did he quickly return, but his absence was

unheeded by the traveller, whose thoughts were entirely engrossed by the grandeur and beauty of the view that suddenly burst upon his sight. The moon had for some time past been hidden by a dark cloud, but she now sailed forth from beneath it, into a highly arched and deep blue sky and lit up with her calm silvery light the beautiful old castle of Conway, which, like Melrose, acquires new beauties when viewed beneath her rays. All nature appeared to have sunk into a state of repose, for no sound was to be heard but the soothing one of the river, as it flowed peacefully and rapidly towards the sea; as the moon rose higher in the heavens, the lines, battlements, and majestic turrets of the castle appeared more distinctly traced against the clear blue sky, whilst the main part of the stately edifice looked as if, like Venice, it was rising from the waves. In the back ground, towering far up into the clouds, were to be seen majestic mountains, on which the deep shadows of night were resting, and a dark impenetrable

forest stretched far down into the vale of Conway, on the left of the castle. Our traveller was not unread in ancient lore, and his thoughts wandered back to the days when

“ The grandeur of the olden time,
Mantled those towers with pride sublime ;”

Now “ split with the winter’s frost, and deep o’ergrown with hemlock or rank fumitory ;” and he exclaimed, in a rather theatrical tone, “ Deserted and ruined as are now yon courts and towers, they once echoed back the proud voice of Edward I., and there the good queen Eleanor, with all that was most fair and noble in her court, has—” but his apostrophe to the castle was suddenly broken in upon by the post-boy, who had joined him unobserved, and who asked him if he would not like to taste the ale, for which he assured him the ferry-house had long and deservedly been famous.

“ Ale !” exclaimed the traveller, in a tone of high indignation ; “ ale ! and who but a

Welsh post-boy would think of drinking ale with such a prospect before him?" but a very cold gust of wind swept across the river, and, drawing his cloak tight around him with one hand, he instinctively held out the other for the black-looking jug that contained the ale. "It should have been Metheglin," he observed on receiving it.

"I take it you did not find it very bad," said the guide, peeping with a look of disappointment into the empty jug that was speedily returned to him. A very shrill exclamation close to his ear, and uttered in an unknown tongue, caused the traveller to turn suddenly round, and he gave an involuntary start at beholding a figure "so wither'd and so wild in her attire," that, like Banquo, he was inclined to doubt whether she were an inhabitant of earth, and if she were, whether she had not "eaten of the insane root that takes the reason prisoner," for in each hand she held a lighted pine branch, which she waved backwards and forwards, with what appeared to the traveller

to be most unearthly rapidity, her tongue all the time keeping pace with the movements of her hands ; he watched her for some time in mute astonishment, and felt quite at a loss to decide whether it was a curse or a spell that she was invoking. At length the post-boy exclaimed, "They see her, they are coming !"

"They see her, they are coming !" repeated the traveller in a perplexed tone ; and, looking around him, he muttered, "I almost expect to see a cauldron arise out of the ground with

' Black spirits and white,
Blue spirits and gray,'

dancing around it, for certainly no human beings are visible."

The woman now laid down her branches, and, accompanied by the post-boy, went back into the hut, leaving the stranger to his own reflections ; at length, but not before he had bestowed more than one hearty curse on the dilatory people of the ferry-house, the sound

of oars fell upon his ears, and soon after he beheld, by the light of the moon, a heavy ill-built boat approaching the shore near which he was standing. The post-boy now joined him, and said, "You see, sir, I was right; I told you they saw her."

"And so," exclaimed the stranger with a loud laugh, "what I had imagined to have been an incantation scene turns out to have been nothing more nor less than a signal to a red-headed, bare-legged ferry-man."

"The boat you see, sir, is kept on the other side," observed the post-boy; "and I don't think that they would have shoved it off to-night had they not guessed that I might be here with my mail-bags."

"An agreeable country to live in," observed the traveller somewhat drily; "and pray," he asked, "if I had not had the honour of your company where must I have passed the night?"

"Well, indeed, at the ferry-house, sir."

"At the ferry-house," retorted the traveller,

in a tone of disgust, accompanied by a most expressive shrug of his shoulders; "why, I have seen many a more inviting-looking pigsty in England; but what has become of that half-naked ferry-man; look for him, and tell him that I am very anxious to get over to the Conway side."

"You see, sir, he is only taking his half pint of ale at the poor widow's. I warrant him he will be here directly."

In truth, the ale was quickly despatched, and the bare-headed and bare-legged ferry-man, who, though low of stature, was of a most athletic form, had pushed off his heavy boat from the shore with as little exertion as if it had been the light coracle of the fisherman, before the stranger had time to utter another complaint.

The traveller sprang gaily into the boat, and was followed by the pony he had ridden from Abergeley. "You owe much to nature, and nothing to your groom," said he, patting his rough side. He was, indeed, a beautiful moun-

tain pony, diminutive in height, but elegant in figure; his neck arched, and his flowing but ungroomed mane sweeping the ground; his ears short and well placed; his eye full of intelligence and fire; his chest broad, and his air spirited; sure-footed and active as a goat; playful and companionable as a dog; capable of supporting great fatigue, and requiring little food or rest; he appeared perfectly conscious of the admiration bestowed on him by the traveller, and rested his head on his shoulder with a look of confiding familiarity.

The solemn stillness of the air, and the melancholy grandeur of the ruined castle, filled the heart of the traveller with a feeling of sadness. His companions were conversing in a language to him unknown, and it sounded wild and shrill to his ears, and reminded him that he was indeed in the land of the stranger, and he longed for the boat to reach the quay, hoping, by a change of posture, to be able to shake off the feeling of loneliness that oppressed his young heart. His meditations were at length broken

in upon by his guide, who asked if he intended putting up for the night at the Harp or at the Goat.

"No, I am going to Mrs. Wynn's."

"Well; but you see, sir, there's many a Mrs. Wynn in Conway. There is Mrs. Wynn of Plas Newydd, Mrs. Wynn of Tan yr Alt, Mrs. Wynn of——" but his list of Mrs. Wynns was cut short by the traveller saying,—

"Plas Conway is the name of the house to which I am going; and when you have delivered the mail-bags I shall feel obliged if you will show me the way to it."

"Well, indeed, as to the mail-bags, now they are of no consequence, sir. I will show you the way to Plas Conway, and deliver them on my way back. It is hard upon midnight, and I take it, Hugh Jones won't trouble his head about them till to-morrow morning."

The stranger expressed some surprise at this, to him, novel mode of conducting the affairs of the post-office, and asked how often, during the week, the post came into Conway.

"In the course of the week, sir. Man alive! why they think it has travelled very fast if they see it once in ten days; but, bless you, sir! it's little they think about me or my bags, if they do not see anything of us for a month, in winter time."

The stranger shrugged up his shoulders, and thanked Heaven he did not live in Conway; but the boat at this instant touched the quay, and he sprang on shore, after remunerating the ferry-man so liberally as to call forth a torrent of thanks from him, not only in Welsh, but in English; "Got bless it!" and "great thanks," were all that were intelligible of the latter language; and indeed, with the exception of a few curses, comprised all the English of which he was master. Our traveller experienced a strange revolution in his feelings on entering the town of Conway, at finding the romantic and interesting old town, as he had painted it in his "mind's eye," to consist of irregular narrow streets, filled with ancient-looking houses, with time-worn and dilapidated

steps, leading to the entrance-doors, and with their upper stories projecting so far into the street, as nearly to touch the upper stories of the opposite houses, which looked as if they had civilly advanced half way to meet them, and by so doing had excluded light and air. Not a human being was to be seen: not a candle glimmered from a single window; and . but for a multitude of pigs that were perambulating the streets, the town would have appeared to have been deserted.

“The good people of Conway keep pigs to guard their houses, instead of dogs, I suppose,” said the stranger; “for there is one at least for each door, and I have not seen a single dog in the whole town.”

“Well, indeed, sir,” replied the guide; “it is little enough the people in this part of the world want with dogs to guard their houses. Why, house-breaking is a thing unheard of; and as to bolting their doors, or barring their windows, as you are obliged to do in England, it’s a thing that never comes into their heads. But

try, sir," he added, on perceiving his companion look rather incredulous ; " lift the latch of any door that you please, and you will find it is no lie that I have been telling you."

" You are quite right, my good fellow," said the traveller ; " I have tried several doors, and they are all unlocked. So after all," he muttered to himself, " the tales recorded of the days of the Irish Brien and our own Edwin may not be fables."

" Well, sir, this is Plas Conway," said the guide, stopping before a very ancient-looking house, built of wood and plaster, whilst the large timbers of which its frame were formed were exposed to view, and painted black ; its upper story projected far into the street, with numerous pointed roofs soaring above it. The traveller, following the advice of his guide, did not knock at the massive door, but opening it, walked in, and found himself in a low but spacious hall, adorned with curiously carved wainscoting and family portraits ; a large turf fire was burning on the ample hearth, and the

light and warmth it shed around cheered the heart of our weary traveller. Numerous, but all equally unsuccessful, were the attempts he made to inform the inmates of his arrival ; and he had received his luggage, taken leave of his mountain pony and his guide, determining to find his way to an inhabited part of the house, when he encountered a venerable grey-headed old man, who lifted up his hands in astonishment, and exclaimed :—

“ Got bless ! it is him, Master Herbert ! him was think it was no possib him come to-night ; but him welcome ; yes, indeed, him welcome ! ” and he grasped the hand held out to him by Herbert with a fervour that spoke as favourably for the warmth of his heart as the strength of his wrist.

“ And how is my aunt, Evan ? ” asked Herbert, extricating his hand from that of the old man, with some difficulty.

“ Him aunt he is quite goot, and Miss Eva he quite goot too.” Old Evan, talking as he went, now led the way down a large paved

passage, and ushered Herbert into a room at the end of it. This room, like the hall, was wainscoted and ornamented with a curiously carved wooden cornice, and a ceiling, composed of elegant elliptic arches of wood, which accorded well with the ancient carved oak furniture, with which the room was filled. On the opening of the door, two ladies started from their seats, and exclaimed in tones of welcome and affection, "Herbert, my dear Herbert!" Long and kind were the greetings on all sides, many the questions asked and answered, many the smiles, and many the sighs, called forth by the checkered list of the joys or sorrows that had befallen friends or beloved relations since last they met. But their conversation was broken in upon by old Evan, who had for some time past been bustling in and out of the room, evidently "on hospitable thoughts intent;" and all being at last arranged to his satisfaction, he came forward, and announced, with a low bow, that supper was served up. Now Herbert Glad-

stone was a most dutiful nephew, and an affectionate cousin, but he was "hungry and athirst;" and he felt that eating his supper would be a more agreeable occupation than listening to the conversation of the most eloquent of human beings, and he walked up to the well-spread table with considerable alacrity. A long fast and mountain air would have rendered the homeliest fare palatable; how excellent then did the broiled salmon, the delicate roasted kid, and the delicious eggs of the razor-bill and guillemot appear. Old Evan stood behind the chair of his mistress, and beheld, with a grin of delight, the ample justice done to all these dishes, in their turn, by the hungry Herbert; but great was the sorrow of Evan at having to remove from the table a dish of lobsters, of which Herbert had declined to partake, and he begged in quite a pathetic tone that he would only just taste them, assuring him at the same time that they were not the least like "them London lobsters, these Master Herbert be rock lobster, look at

she," and he held one up in what he considered the most tempting point of view, "is n't she a beauty?" Herbert promised to eat "the beauty" for his breakfast, which somewhat comforted old Evan, and he soon after left the room, but quickly returned and placed before Herbert a covered silver dish, and a large tankard, likewise of silver; as Evan raised the cover of the dish, his light grey eyes sparkled with delight, and casting a glance of triumph at Herbert, he exclaimed. "Well inteet Master Herbert, this here dish be goot enough for Queen Anne, Got bless he."

Herbert made a low mock bow to the dish that was deemed good enough for royalty, which turned out to be the favourite national one of toasted cheese, which, when accompanied, as on the present occasion, with toast steeped in strong ale, was called "the rare bit," and which the Saxons have corrupted into Welsh rabbit. Herbert contrived to eat up "the rare bit," and it was very evident that by so doing he raised himself many degrees

in the estimation of Evan. Evan and the supper at length disappeared, and Herbert drew his chair nearer to that of his cousin, and with a smile alluded to events of bygone days. Three years had passed since they had last met, and great was the change these three years had worked in both. Eva, at the period referred to, was on a visit to her aunt, Lady Gladstone, in London; she was then a tall, thin, timid girl, at the awkward age of fifteen, "blushing rosy red" if looked at, and if spoken to appearing as anxious as ever did a frightened mouse, with whom a familiar cat had entered into conversation, to hide in a corner; but all this timidity would instantly vanish if any one uttered a disparaging word of her native country, kindred, or friends, "the eloquent blood" would mount up to her transparent forehead, and her dark blue eyes would flash fire, and the usually silent mountain maiden would astonish a whole party with a burst of eloquence, "warm from the heart, and to the heart addressed." Having

been brought up in the country, and a stranger to all form, most intolerably irksome did she find it to be obliged to sit, night after night, perpendicularly, on a far from easy chair, surrounded by one of the most dull and stately circles of the day ; and, though totally unacquainted with the art of flirting a fan, being nevertheless condemned to hold an enormous one in her hand, Lady Gladstone having presented her with it on the day after she had arrived, accompanied with the request that when next she felt inclined to yawn in her presence, that she would place it before her mouth. Then she was contemptuously informed that tea, not butter-milk, was the proper beverage for a young lady ; and tea she was compelled to sip night and morning, till she envied the humblest peasant in Wales, who might drink milk whenever he pleased. But her minor miseries did not end here, for her aunt not only insisted on her learning the then fashionable game of ombre, but expected her to play it night after night,

for the amusement of a rich old bachelor cousin of Lord Gladstone's, from whom the family had great expectations. "But all these troubles, and many more, I could bear with patience," observed Eva, in one of her letters to her mother, "were it not for the horrible view from my bed-room window; why, I see nothing but roofs of houses and smoking chimneys." Poor Eva! her situation was indeed a pitiable one; and no Roman Catholic ever hailed a Saint's day with more satisfaction than she did, for on Saints days and Sundays, her cousin Herbert, who was at school at Westminster, spent the day at home; and as he was good-tempered, quick, and very lively, and quite as great an enemy to form as herself, they speedily became great friends, and she found in him, on all occasions, a sympathizing listener. He was a high-spirited, handsome youth, and a son that most mothers would have felt proud of; and so, in truth, felt Lady Gladstone, though he appeared little likely to accomplish the long-cherished hope of her

heart—that of his being “the glass of fashion and the mould of form, the observed of all observers;” for he was not only slovenly in his dress, and a hater of dancing and dancing-masters, but an ardent admirer of water quinquain cricket, foot-ball, and ditch-leaping; and on his numberless half and whole holidays, his poor mother found it necessary to repeat the same admonitory speech of “My dear Herbert, you must not expect to be either admired or respected, till you have cured yourself of stooping, and have learned to dress, not like a savage, but a Christian.”

It required but little to awake “the pert and nimble spirit of mirth” in Herbert, and one morning, after listening with dutiful attention to this well-known speech of his mother’s, and encouraged by an arch look from Eva, he ventured to reply in a tone of mock earnestness, accompanied with a sigh, “I wish I were Mr. Dumont!”

“Heaven forbid, my child!” exclaimed Lady

Gladstone, in a voice of horror. "Why he is a tailor!"

"Very true, madam; but if good dressing infers that you are a good Christian, he must be a very good Christian indeed; and, moreover, is the cause of hundreds of people being good Christians as well as himself."

A violent rustling of her richly-brocaded gown was the only outward sign exhibited by Lady Gladstone, that this speech of her son's was not agreeable to her. Eva's visit was not one of short duration, she remained in London upwards of six months; she learned to dance a cotillon and a minuet, to courtesy as low on entering her aunt's drawing-room, as if about to be ushered into the presence of King William; to sing a French song, and to detest a town life, and everything connected with it; and "blessed was the hour, and happy was the day," that saw her seated by the side of her aunt's waiting-woman, in an old lumbering coach, and on her road to Chester, at which town Mrs. Wynn had promised to meet her.

Lady Gladstone, at parting with her niece, had kissed her with a warmth that astonished her ; but Eva had persuaded Herbert not only to take lessons in dancing, but to wear gloves, and have a suit of clothes made by M. Dumont ; and by so doing had gained the love and admiration of her aunt. Herbert left London for Oxford on the same day that Eva set off for Conway, and a variety of events occurred to prevent their meeting again till the evening on which this tale commenced. Eva could hardly persuade herself that the elegant and fashionably-dressed youth now seated by her side, and the slovenly, mischief-loving Herbert of other days, could be one and the same person ; and glancing her eyes over his splendid riding dress, she observed, with a smile :—

“ I am afraid, though from a different cause, that you patronize poor M. Dumont as little now as you did formerly.”

“ Oh, poor Dumont !” said Herbert, laughing ; “ even you, Eva, could not persuade me

to employ him now. He is no longer the fashionable tailor he was in your London days. I have not employed him even to work for my servant for the last year."

Old Evan now made his appearance with lighted lamps in his hand ; and walking up to Herbert, he reminded him, with the familiarity of an old and somewhat spoiled servant, that nine o'clock was the hour at which the family was in the habit of retiring to rest, and that it was now past midnight.

"For your own sake, as well as ours, I recommend you to take Evan's hint," said Mrs. Wynn ; "you must require rest, and we must be up early to-morrow, for we always breakfast at seven o'clock on a Sunday morning."

When out of hearing of his aunt, Herbert asked Evan if it was positively necessary for him to make his appearance at such an unchristian-like hour ; but little encouragement did he receive from that quarter to act the sluggard, so he hurried into bed as quickly as

he possibly could, determining to make the best use of all the refreshing slumber the dull god would grant him during the short time allowed him for its indulgence. Fatigue helped him to carry this resolution immediately into effect, and he fell asleep, not only before "half a prayer he'd said," but had answered a question he had asked himself, *videlicet*—whether the expression fascinating or beautiful, would most correctly describe his cousin, Eva Wynn?

Brightly shone the sun through the casement window of Herbert's bedchamber "right early in the morning," and roused him from his refreshing and dreamless sleep. He instantly sprung from his bed, and was more than half dressed when Evan made his appearance, and offered his services as valet. With a droll mixture of admiration and contempt, he examined the brocaded waistcoat, velvet coat, and gaily fringed boots and gloves, in which Herbert hoped, aided by a good figure and handsome face, to make no common impression on the fair ladies of Conway.

"Well, Evan, what think you of my waist-coat?" asked Herbert, observing that the eyes of the old man were fixed earnestly upon it.

"Him was think, Master Herbert, when him spoke, could dear old master Colonel Wynn see him how it laugh."

This was by no means an agreeable or expected answer to Herbert, but he consoled himself with the reflection, that an angel would not have found more favour in Evan's sight, had he appeared in any garb save that of a buff coat, a dress in which for many years his late master had made no mean figure; but dreading one of the "never-ending still-beginning" tales that invariably followed the most distant allusion to his dear old master, or a buff coat, Herbert assured Evan that he had no further occasion for his services; but, though Herbert finished his toilet in haste and unassisted, yet his last glance at the looking-glass was far from being an unsatisfactory one. "What will Eva think of my appearance?" he muttered almost audibly.

But after Herbert had wandered down one long dark passage and up another, turned to the left and then to the right, and after all found himself once more at his bed-room door, he began to wish that he had not dismissed Evan so summarily.

"But," he exclaimed, "if I do not take courage I shall lose my breakfast, so I will try to find my way down this yet unexplored passage."

At the end of it Herbert was happy to find a flight of stairs; these he quickly descended, and opened the first door he beheld; but instead of his eyes being regaled as he had flattered himself they would be by a comfortable and well-spread breakfast-table, and his aunt and cousin seated at it, they saw a long, low and dark kitchen, with a group of what appeared to him half-naked women busily engaged round a large turf fire. On perceiving Herbert, one and all uttered a shrill exclamation of surprise, and he hastily closed the door, but not before he had observed that caps, gowns, shoes

and stockings, formed no part of their attire. Perceiving a door at the end of the passage standing half open, he walked towards it, and was well pleased to see his aunt seated at the breakfast-table, in the same room in which he had supped. She was dressed in a black silk gown, so thickly plaited as to mimic well the fashionable hoop, which had not at this period found its way into Wales; her hair, which grief, not age, had turned grey, was combed back from her high forehead, and was almost concealed by a cap of dazzling whiteness; her soft full grey eyes, though they had been dimmed by many a tear, and her still handsome features, told how very lovely she in youth had been, and there was a gentle dignity in her manner, and a sweetness in her smile, that still rendered her fascinating to the young and the old. On a cushion at her feet sat Eva, with a large family Bible resting on her knees; her head was slightly bent over the Bible, from which she was reading aloud; a profusion of glossy brown ringlets nearly concealed

her face ; but her soft musical voice riveted Herbert to the spot, and he almost feared to breathe lest he should break the charm that appeared to surround him ; but the chapter was soon finished, and the book closed, and Herbert was not sorry to find that he was not in fairy land, but in a large comfortable apartment, with a substantial breakfast waiting his pleasure.

“ You will accompany us to church, Herbert ? ” said Mrs. Wynn, “ for though the service will be performed in a language, with which you are unacquainted, you will find no difficulty in following us during the prayers.”

Herbert bowed his acquiescence to this proposal, for, though like most of the fashionable young men of his day, he was little in the habit of attending any church, yet he felt anxious to stand high in the good opinion of his aunt, of whom he was very fond ; and, moreover, he flattered himself with the idea, that if he did not derive much spiritual comfort from the Reverend Meredyth-ap-Owen-

ap-Griffith-ap-Rees-Jones' sermon, that he might, amusement. His unsuspecting aunt felt pleased with his ready compliance with her wishes, and when out of his hearing expressed to Eva the pleasure it gave her to find him so much improved in mind and appearance, and she asked, "What do you think of him, Eva?"

"As of a knight well spoken, neat and fine."

"Eva, Eva," said Mrs. Wynn, shaking her head, but smiling at the same time, "do not traduce your cousin, or quote from vain plays on a Sunday morning."

Herbert was disappointed of the amusement he had promised himself, for he could detect nothing in the clergyman's manner to turn into ridicule, and the unaffected piety of the whole congregation excited his surprise and respect; but his sense of the ridiculous was much too keen to allow of his newly awakened piety preventing his laughing when, during the sermon, at the same instant, men, women, and children rose from their seats and

spat upon the floor;* he turned to Eva, and asked her what was the matter?

"Oh, nothing!" said Eva, who could not suppress a smile; "the worthy people are only expressing their abhorrence of the devil, they always spit when his name is pronounced in church."

Many a low courtesy was dropped to the young sals as he left the church, by rosy-cheeked, black-eyed maidens, dressed in short linsey-woolsey gowns, and black beaver hats. That he had excited much admiration was evident, but could he have comprehended the language he would have heard many remarks on his dress, not one jot more complimentary than that of old Evan's. The observations of one old woman, in particular, who leant on her stick, and examined him from head to foot, as he passed by her, would have surprised him, by their mixture of shrewdness and simplicity.

* The catechumens in the primitive church were in the habit of spitting, in order to intimate their abhorrence of Satan and all his works.

"My dear aunt and cousin," Herbert at length exclaimed, "do not your hands ache? Why I verily believe that you have shaken hands with and spoken to every old man and woman in Conway, and you both smile and look as if you, not they, were the obliged party."

"Herbert, you little know," said Mrs. Wynn, "how highly we are paid for the notice we bestow on these poor people, paid with the only coin they have to offer, paid with love and blessings. You may smile and think the love and blessing of an old woman are boons that you would readily dispense with, but remember the most touching of all the misfortunes of the unhappy Richard II. is recorded in that impressive line of the poet, "and no one cried, God save him."

"If the blessing of an old woman," said Herbert with a smile, "is of such value, how happy must that man be who is followed by that of a young woman. My dear Eva, pray teach me how I may win one from that pretty

smiling maiden yonder ; would a present of a new red ribbon call one down upon my head ?”

“ No, Herbert ; she would shame the ribbon by blushing a more beautiful red, and instantly return it ; but if you offered a present to her aged father, she would bless you again and again.”

“ Dear, sweet, unsophisticated maidens !” exclaimed the laughing Herbert ; “ I verily believe that I must relinquish all my dreams of future glory, and pitch my tent amongst you in Conway.”

“ Laugh on now, Master Herbert, but if, after a month’s residence amongst us, you do not allow that the Welsh are artless, brave, hospitable, and warm-hearted ; dutiful as children, affectionate as husbands and wives, and the most indulgent of parents, never dare to darken the doors of Plas Conway again.”

“ And yet,” said Mrs. Wynn, with a smile, “ it must be confessed that we have a few national failings, Eva.

“ Dearest mother, what do you consider

our national failings?" eagerly asked Eva. "I never heard you speak disparagingly of your native country before."

"My dear child," replied Mrs. Wynn, "after a few more years have passed over your head, you will have learned, as I have done, that perfection is not to be met with even in the mountains of Wales; but I think that even you must allow that we are, as a nation, too fond of ale—'sudden and quick in quarrel' at wakes and fairs—and apt to clothe ourselves with curses as a garment; and, with sorrow do I speak it, the very intensity of feeling of which you make a boast, when ill-directed, leads to fearful crimes; but here comes one who, I would gladly flatter myself possesses all the virtues, untainted by any of the vices, of the Welsh nation."

"My old college friend," exclaimed Herbert, in a tone of joy, and at the same time hastening forward to meet him; "my old college friend, Howel Llewelyn."

CHAPTER II.

Hail, ancient manners ! sure defence,
Where they survive, of wholesome laws ;
Remnants of love—whose modest sense
Thus into narrow room withdraws.
Hail, usages of pristine mould,
And ye that guard them, mountains old !

SELDOM had been witnessed a greater contrast than that presented by Howel Llewelyn and Herbert Gladstone. The form of Howel was tall, light, and active, but at the same time denoted considerable strength ; his eyes of dark hazel were clear and full ; his forehead high and broad, and a profusion of glossy black hair adorned his well-shaped head ; he

was, indeed, "a goodly gentlyman, garniged with many godly gyftes, both of nature and of grace, and come of the noble lignage and ancient lyne" of Llewellyn the Great. Herbert Gladstone, slight in figure, delicate in feature and limb, looked several years younger than Howell, though in point of fact they were the same age. Herbert's clear, dark complexion, and his deep-set but sparkling black eyes, showed that Norman blood was mingled in his veins with that of British, from which nation, on the female side, he claimed descent. But greatly as they differed in figure and feature, they differed still more in their style of dress. Howel, in a plain but handsome suit, with a broad-brimmed hat, slightly turned up in front, and a single feather from an eagle's wing suspended not ungracefully on one side, looked the soldier and the gentleman. Herbert, on the contrary, attired in velvet and brocade, with fringed gloves and boots, cocked hat, and elaborately curled wig, looked as if nature had intended him for a lady's page, and

“to write sonnets to his mistress’s eyebrow ;” yet war was to be his vocation, as well as Howel Llewelyn’s. Happy as was Howel to see his old friend, it was evident that his eyes frequently wandered from Herbert, and rested upon Eva, in the midst of the former’s most interesting communications, and at last, by some inexplicable manœuvre, Herbert found himself by the side of his aunt, and Eva leaning on the arm of Howel. Mrs. Wynn, fortunately for Herbert, who was fond of hearing his own voice, possessed a very rare quality, she was an excellent listener ; her look of deep interest, her smile of sympathy, her sigh of pity, was always well-timed, and she never appeared so much engrossed with her own thoughts as to be unable to attend to those of other people ; and so well satisfied was Herbert with his companion, that on reaching Plas Conway, he exclaimed with a half-suppressed sigh, — “ And are we here already ? ”

“ Gladstone, you are probably aware that

we have many singular customs in Wales that are not to be met with, I believe, in any part of England," said Howel Llewelyn to Herbert, as they were standing together in the bay window of the common sitting-room at Plas Conway, in which they had just eaten their one o'clock dinner, "and if you are inclined to witness the humours of one called Stocsio, follow me, and I will act the part of interpreter."

Herbert, nothing loath, took up his hat, and walking after Howel, soon found himself in the High Street of Conway; from every house in which might be seen men and boys rushing out, amidst shouts of laughter, each holding in his hand branches of gorse in full bloom; they all followed, in "most admired disorder," a short, stout-built, red-haired youth, whose vacant countenance was expressive of nothing but good humour; the motley group, however, had fixed upon him for the leader of the revels of Easter-day, not on account of his possessing more wealth or wisdom than his neighbours,

but in consequence of his being the last benedict amongst them; with long strides and swinging gait the hero of the hour led the way to a small eminence at a short distance from the town, where a throne of rough stones had been erected for him; he scrambled to the top and bowed, or, more correctly speaking, nodded to the assembled crowd before him; all stood bare-headed, some out of respect for the royal presence; but others, and they composed by far the most numerous portion of the assembled throng, in consequence of not having a hat. The monarch of Easter-day waved his sceptre of gorse, and silence the most profound followed; but "the gods had not made" him eloquent, and he stammered through a speech that had cost the clerk of the parish much trouble to compose, and still more to teach him; but not before he had hemmed more than once did he mumble,—

"Trusty and well-beloved subjects, the respectful attention with which the laws of Easter-day have ever been regarded by you

and your forefathers, leads me to hope that not one black sheep will be found amongst you ; but that one and all will aid in bringing to speedy trial any man who has not reached the age of three score, and is yet such a lover of his bed as not to have joined us in the High Street before the clock has sounded five to-morrow morning ; and as for the vigorous men of forty, as heretofore, let them, as they value our royal favour, be found in attendance before the sun has risen ; and you, my merry lads, who have not yet seen twenty, follow me, and remember, should it be discovered that any one man amongst you has, like a sluggard, crept to his bed to-night, that without judge or jury he will be condemned to pass the whole of to-morrow in the stocks."

Loud and enthusiastic cheers followed this royal address ; but it was evident to Herbert that they were not all occasioned by admiration of royal eloquence, but that the discovery that young Squire Llewelyn made one of their party, had at least called forth one cheer more.

Like Mrs. Wynn and Eva, he appeared to have a kind word or smile for every one, and young and old crowded around him, anxious to obtain a sign, however trifling, that he observed them. Even the royal bridegroom forgot his dignity, and stood, hat in hand, waiting till his turn should arrive to receive a nod or a shake of the hand. Howel at length perceived him, and, advancing to the place where he stood, bowed as low as if in the presence of real royalty. A loud laugh ran through the crowd. Herbert could not suppress a slight feeling of envy, at witnessing not only the love but the respect with which Howel was evidently regarded, though he indulged in familiarities that militated strangely against all Herbert's preconceived notions of dignity. Sundry glances, directed towards the spot where Herbert Gladstone stood, convinced him that he was the subject of conversation between his friend and the monarch of the day; and the frequent and loud bursts of laughter that invariably followed one of these

glances, fell with anything but a soothing sound on his rather too sensitive ear. At length his patience quite gave way, and he exclaimed, in a language that, fortunately for him, was not understood by the crowd that surrounded him:—"What a horrible row these only half-civilized fellows are making! How can Llewelyn take pleasure in such society?"

At this most inauspicious moment, Howel came up to him, and, with an ill-suppressed smile, delivered a message with which he had been intrusted, he said, by his majesty of the gorse. On learning its purport, well might Herbert have been designated "the knight of the woeful countenance;" for he was required to deliver up, for the temporary use of the king of the day, his splendid cocked hat and feathers. There was a smile, not only about Llewelyn's mouth, but in his eye, that added fuel to the kindling wrath in his heart, and in a tone of some irritation, he said,—“I have to thank you, Llewelyn, for having put it into the

head of that semi-barbarian yonder to make this absurd, irrational request."

"No, Gladstone, on my honour, no," said Howel, endeavouring to look very serious; "it was one of his followers of low degree that suggested it to his majesty; but he, pleased with the suggestion, immediately ordered me to make his royal wishes known to you."

"Llewelyn," exclaimed Gladstone, "point out to me the man that made this most impertinent proposal, that"—

"That you may knock him down," said Howel laughing; "but I really cannot see him—he is lost in the crowd—he is a very short man, and therefore beneath your notice, and an old one to boot," continued Howel, who was anxious to screen the delinquent, who was Mrs. Wynn's old servant Evan.

"Well, well, Llewelyn, never mind him," said Herbert, good-humouredly, "but give me the best advice you can in this important af-

fair ; you know the people we have to deal with ; say, then, if it is absolutely necessary for me to give up my hat ; for, far from pleasant as I should vote it to parade the streets bare-headed on any occasion, it would be doubly annoying to know that I was the laughing-stock of such a barelegged mob as the one yonder."

Llewelyn, though evidently on mischief bent, was too kind hearted to persevere in his scheme, when he discovered how little palatable it was to Herbert ; and delicately hinted that the king of the gorse might not be able to resist the charms of a golden bribe. Happy to retain his hat on any conditions, Herbert gladly placed in Howel's hand a much larger sum than the occasion required ; and, judging by the shout of joy with which it was received by the monarch and his men, the royal coffer must have been empty indeed. Huzzas and cheers arose with a deafening sound, and the name of Gladstone echoed from rock to rock ; and, though it is not recorded that he thanked

the crowd. "for their most sweet voices," he was well satisfied at the turn the affair had so unexpectedly taken, and he gaily acquiesced in Howel's proposal of returning to Plas Conway, and taking a little supper and a little rest, and that they should then sally forth to join again the merry revel rout.

"I will pass my word," said Howel, trying to look grave, "that no fresh personal annoyance shall be offered you; and I think that you cannot, in six short months, have so completely laid aside your Oxford tastes as to dislike a good genuine row."

"Oh, far from it; I only felt rather apprehensive lest his majesty might take a fancy to my coat or waistcoat, or, perchance, in imitation of his countryman, Owen Glendower, send me 'bootless home.'"

"No, you need not fear that yon red-headed monarch will exact further tribute from you, either in dress or gold, but he will perhaps claim your assistance to bring to summary punishment some refractory subject, who may

have preferred a good night's rest to obeying the arbitrary laws that have been promulgated this evening."

The early hours at Plas Conway suited well with the arrangements of the young men; and they had enjoyed many hours of comfortable sleep before the punctual Evan knocked at their doors, and announced that three o'clock had struck. Howel's toilet was finished before young Gladstone had settled which of his coats was best suited for the work in which he was likely to be engaged; and Howel, on entering his room, found him in a state of great perplexity.

"Bless me, Gladstone!" exclaimed Howel, "what matters it if you do spoil your coat? Why, your father is rich enough to buy you a dozen new ones, and if we lose much more time we shall have a mob about the door, and the noise and confusion that will follow will awake Mrs. Wynn and Eva."

"You do not mean to tell me, Llewelyn, that the rabble would dare to knock at the

door of this house, and ask for us?" exclaimed Herbert, in utter astonishment.

"Yes; and, moreover, if we were not forthcoming, they would try to force back the strong bar that, as a matter of precaution, was placed across the entrance-door last night, and most probably succeed, and carry us both off to the stocks in noisy triumph."

"To the stocks!" repeated Herbert several times in a tone of blank dismay; but a loud shout arose at this instant in the street, and he followed Howel, who was already at the bottom of the stairs, with as much speed and trepidation as if he had been making his escape from the gallows; but when the door was opened, and he saw by the light of the moon the much dreaded stocks borne along by a party of stout young fellows, ripe for any mischief, he hastily retreated into the house, but Howel caught him by the arm, and dragged him into the street, which, early as it was, was thronged by a dense mob. A bare-legged party of musicians preceded the

bearers of the stocks, and, with worn-out drums and ill-played pipes, succeeded to their hearts' content in "making night hideous." Time and tune were evidently trifling minutiae, deemed quite unworthy of notice; but the exertions of the fifers were beyond all praise: had life or death depended upon each puff, their cheeks could not have been more widely distended. One youth, in particular, looked the very counterpart of Æolus, as represented in Æsop's fables, when endeavouring to persuade the traveller to take off his cloak; nor did the resemblance consist alone in the cheeks, for every hair on his head stood erect, "like quills upon the fretful porcupine," but whether from his great exertions, or from alarm at the uncouth sounds proceeding from his mouth, we know not. Nor must the praiseworthy deeds of the drummers be passed over in silence for they beat with all their hearts, and with all their strength, and succeeded in raising such a din, that it was quite wonderful that they did not, like fear, recoil "at the sound themselves had made."

Nor did their noisy exertions flag for an instant, till a loud shout from the crowd announced that the stocks were securely fastened across the lower part of the High Street.

"What is to be done next?" inquired Herbert.

"We are going to search for a delinquent to place in the stocks. Old Evan, whom you may see, if you look to the right, in earnest conversation with a groom of my father's, has just learned that an unfortunate tailor, who was supposed to have been in Bangor, is not only in Conway, but actually in his bed and snoring. Now the first offence would be sufficient to condemn him to pass the whole of the day in the stocks; but the second being one for which there is no parallel in our annals of Easter Monday, he must be tried by a judge and jury of the cleverest men amongst us, and the judge must invent some unheard of punishment to meet this hitherto unheard of crime. If the affair be well managed, we shall

have rare fun ; but we must first catch our man."

The catching the man, however, proved by no means an easy task, or one devoid of danger : he appeared to be well prepared for his assailants, and armed at all points. Doors, windows, and every possible or impossible place of ingress, was tried in vain : front and back door were shaken and battered, till the destruction of the whole house appeared inevitable ; yet not a sound was heard from within, and a murmur began to run through the crowd, that Evan Mrs. Wynn (a title given him to distinguish him from at least a dozen other persons of the same name, in Conway) had not heard aright, and that it was an owl, and not Hugh Davies the tailor, that he had detected in the high misdemeanor of snoring on the morning of Easter Monday. A council of war was now called, and it was determined that their forces should be drawn off, and a sentinel only be left in ambush, at the bottom of the street, to watch the move-

ments of more than one household, suspected of harbouring a worshipper of Morpheus amongst them; but fear of punishment, not hope of rest, now induced them to resist "the strong arm of the law:" for "sleep no more" could not have been more authoritatively commanded by conscience to Macbeth, than by the Easter revellers to the inhabitants of Conway.

Herbert, who entered into the sports of the day with as much eagerness as the youngest lad of the party, offered his services as sentinel, and they were most graciously accepted. He instantly concealed himself in a dark nook that not only commanded a view of the whole street, but was well placed for keeping a vigilant watch on the barricaded house. The sun was beginning to appear above the tops of the houses, and thrifty housewives were to be seen bustling about in their vocation, while casements were opening, and merry maidens stretching their necks out of them to watch the retreating forms of the motley crowd.

But no thrifty housewife, or laughing maiden, appeared at door or window of the suspected house. Nature had not bestowed a large stock of patience on Herbert, and therefore he wisely drew but small drafts upon it at a time; but on the present occasion patience appeared in great danger of becoming a bankrupt, when, as if to avert so direful an evil, an eye, for no other feature of the face was distinctly to be seen, appeared looking anxiously forth from a half opened window at the top of the house. Herbert instantly determined upon the course he would pursue: he waited till the eye was withdrawn, and then walked quietly down the street, at the bottom of which he encountered old Evan, who, vexed and irritated at having the accuracy of his hearing called in question, had deserted from the main body, intending to offer his services and superior wisdom to Herbert, whom he looked upon as a mere child, and considered as very unfit for the office he had imposed upon himself; and this opinion

was confirmed beyond a doubt by this unexpected meeting.

"Well, inteet, master Herbert," exclaimed the old man, in a tone of no mock indignation, "him call it soldier, and it desert him post; den't it know him shall be shot."

"Only let me bring the culprit to justice, and then shoot me if you like," said Gladstone, laughing; "but you look tired, my old friend, and as I see the sign of the 'Harp,' yonder, take this piece of silver, and go in and refresh yourself with a jug of good ale, or *cwrtw da*, as you would call it."

The old man was softened by this slight attempt on the part of Herbert to utter the only language in the world that he deemed worthy of being listened to by christian ears, and he suppressed the rising wrath which the commencement of this speech had called forth, and walked off, muttering to himself, "Tired, tired, inteet; him little know him strength."

"Evan," said Herbert, calling after him, "if you hear me cry out 'tally-ho,' be with

me instantly : for I shall then have unearthed the old fox."

Herbert, in an unconcerned and leisurely manner, retraced his steps up the street, humming a lively air. His voice, though not powerful, was remarkably sweet, and many a young and old female came to their doors to listen, and to gaze at the strange gentleman as he passed. Perceiving that he had attracted the attention of a group of young ladies, he stopped, took off his hat, and bowed to them with a grace and ease that a Frenchman might have sighed in vain to surpass, and sung "Where the bee sucks," in most exquisite style. The young ladies, who probably comprehended the words as little as did the bare-headed servant girls who were peeping over their shoulders in open-mouthed wonder, bowed their thanks for this most unexpected serenade. Well pleased as Herbert felt when he perceived the admiration his singing had excited in the breasts of the pretty smiling group at the window, his pleasure was won-

derfully increased by observing that the charms of his voice had attracted a woman to the door of the house he was so bent upon entering. She was evidently apprehensive of danger, and held the half-opened door firmly grasped with one hand, whilst with the other she endeavoured to keep back a stout child of six years of age, who was as pertinaciously bent on coming forward to see "the gentleman," as was his mother to keep him in the house. Apparently occupied with the young ladies, but in reality watching every movement of the woman, Herbert again doffed his hat, and again bowed reverently and low, and sung with taste and spirit a hunting song : the tally-ho in the last line of the first verse had the effect of a trumpet call upon old Evan ; he set down an untouched horn of excellent ale on a table, and bustled into the street. Herbert advanced a few steps nearer to the woman, and under pretence of exhibiting the feathers in his hat to her child, stood before her and concealed the approach of Evan :

she had even relinquished her hold of the door; and taking advantage of the surprise that she was thrown into by the unexpected appearance of the old man, Herbert sprang past her into the kitchen, and beheld, to his no small delight, the object of all this manœuvring seated by the fire. But nature had written tailor as legibly upon his face and figure as if it had been branded there by art; and Herbert felt that making prisoner such an epitome of a man would cover him with more ridicule than glory. The tailor made no attempt even at resistance; but a loud and stormy war of words was heard from without, which was being carried on between his help-mate and Evan. Herbert grasped the nerveless arm of his prisoner, and dragged him to the door; but there he found it expedient to stop: for the tailor's wife, although "she was little, was fierce;" and her eyes, nose, mouth, chin, yes, her very hair and cap spoke the vixen; and with arms akimbo, she stood before the door, and looked unutterable things

at Herbert; and with shrill and rapid eloquence endeavoured to rouse in her timid husband any dormant courage that might linger in his heart; but finding all attempts in that quarter vain, she turned towards Herbert, and showered down upon him such a torrent of curses, imprecations, and oaths, as would have made his blood run cold, had he understood the language in which they were uttered. But the woman perceiving that her rage excited mirth, not fear, in a violent burst of passion, summoned all the English she could speak to her aid, and exclaimed, "confounded villain, sais, hang he! curse he!"

As long as the abuse and curses bestowed upon Herbert were uttered in a language he could not understand, Evan had remained most philosophically quiet, thinking, perhaps, "that discretion was the best part of valour;" and that it would be desirable, if possible, to keep on peaceable terms with a fury of such celebrity as Nelly Davies; but when she

addressed Herbert in English, and uttered such unchristian-like words, he felt that it was necessary for the honour of the house of Wynn, that he should "draw the sword and throw away the scabbard;" and, with the dexterity and familiarity of an old soldier, he threw his arms round the waist of the virago and whirled her to the furthest extremity of the kitchen. Herbert instantly drew his prize into the street, which was fast filling with men and boys, rumour having speedily spread the news of the capture of the knight of the thimble; and the shouts and laughter called forth by his woe-begone look, were doubled when old Evan rushed into the midst of them, followed by the wife of the tailor, who clung most tenaciously to the skirt of his coat. Long and fearful was the struggle; but the flap of the coat at length remained, to tell a tale of triumph, in the hands of the virago. Evan, in a state of "fine frenzy," pulled off his coat, and throwing it to her, said, "it is old and good-for-nothing, like your husband;

but as you seem to have a fancy for worthless things, take that."

The luckless tailor, strongly guarded (for an attempt at a rescue was expected), was led away to a neighbouring ale house, or public, as it was termed. Howel and Evan, who had now joined Gladstone, were busily engaged in fixing upon a judge and jury to try the delinquent, when their party was most unexpectedly increased by the presence of a man in a dress so gay and strange as to call forth an expression of surprise from Herbert; but Llewelyn, the instant he perceived him, held out his hand and said, "You are most welcome, Billy Bangor; but may we be permitted to ask, what has induced you to visit Conway at this early hour in the morning?"

"Verily, my good master," was the reply, "the king of the fools has come to visit the king of the gorse, well knowing that he should find hundreds of his subjects paying homage to him, and deeming it right to sanction their proceedings."

"Gracious and condescending," observed Howel; "and as one of the most devoted of your subjects has just been taken captive by this doughty knight, whom men call Herbert Gladstone, you will have an opportunity of pleading his cause, or pronouncing his doom as judge, for he is in the space of one short hour to be brought to trial."

"Let me be judge, let me be judge, Master Howel Llewelyn; for methinks my cap and bells will accord well with the judge's wig."

"And you, Llewelyn," said Herbert, "shall plead the cause of the unhappy wight."

"Not I, on my honour," exclaimed Howel; "no, it shall never be said that I defended a cowardly tailor; but I see Owen Griffith, my father's huntsman, at the door of the 'Goat;' he married a tailor's daughter."

"And is, therefore, a very proper person to plead in favour of a goose, you opine," said Billy Bangor. "Well, so let it be; Owen Griffith and I have met before to-day; and I have often thought when I have seen him

risking his neck by running headlong down a rock after a worthless fox, that, had he worn my cap and gown, the cry, instead of being tally-ho, boys, there goes the fox, would have been hark forward, hark forward, and save the poor fool!"

Howel gave some orders to Evan, and then adjourned with Herbert to Mrs. Wynn's, in order to procure some breakfast; their meal was quickly despatched; but, nevertheless, when they again joined the crowd in the High Street, they found the judge not only dressed, but mounted on horseback; a more absurd or grotesque figure than he presented had seldom been seen even in the train of the lord of misrule. Over his coat of many colours was thrown a gown that had, in an age gone by, actually decked the person of a learned judge, but time had committed strange havoc in its original hue, and had worn sundry holes in various parts of it, and the motley garb beneath it peeped through them, and gave it the appearance of being patched with pieces of

red, blue, green, and yellow cloth. Nor did the well-flowered and copiously greased wig, surmounted by the cap and bells, excite less amusement. That the horse on which the judge was mounted had received two of the warnings to prepare for death there was no gainsaying, for he was blind and lame, and his dot-and-go-one motion shook, at every step he took, not only a cloud of flour from the wig, but caused the bells in the cap to jingle. Women and children followed the crowd, and all present, save the unfortunate tailor and his vixen wife, seemed to enjoy the scene.

"And who," asked Herbert, "is Billy Bangor? he wears, it is true, a fool's dress, but his words show that shrewdness, if not wit, lurks beneath that garb."

"Very true," replied Howel; "and yet he claims no higher station in the household of the Mostyns of Mostyn but that of fool; but I frankly own to you that I would ten times rather possess his lively wit than the dull sense of many a man who looks at him with an eye of

sober sadness and contempt, and exclaims, poor fool!"

The cavalcade soon came to a halt opposite to the heap of stones that a few hours before had served for a throne for the monarch of Easter-day, and was now to be converted into a box for the judge. A large flat stone proved no bad substitute for a table, and on it Billy Bangor laid, with an air of most judge-like gravity, a short stick, ornamented at the top with a fool's head, curiously carved, and which he styled an official sceptre. Everything was arranged with the strictest regard to the forms observed in a regular court of justice, but the jury were obliged to stand, for the identical reason assigned in a trial of similar importance, because "they had ne'er a seat." The spindle-shanked, long-armed, and gaunt-looking prisoner was summoned to answer the charges brought against him, in the name of Thomas the Fortieth, King of the Gorse: the tailor was dragged forward by two rough-headed mischievous-looking lads, who dubbed

themselves officers. The judge then arose, and, with a look of dignified gravity that offered a most ludicrous contrast to his dress and whole appearance, proceeded to charge the jury:—

“Gentlemen,—From the well known softness of your hearts, and hardness of your heads, I am quite convinced, however clear may be the evidence against this idle, refractory tailor, that your verdict will be—not guilty, my lord; therefore, I shall not waste my breath, nor your patience, by saying another word.”

The loud gingling of the bells in the cap of the judge seemed a fitting accompaniment to his learned speech, and he sat down with a look of self-satisfaction that called forth shouts of laughter. The simply lifting up of his finger, and the ordering his audience to laugh at it, would always create mirth; but his air and manner, assumed to imitate one puffed up with “a little brief authority,” was so truly comic, and yet so correct, that it com-

pletely upset the gravity of John the carpenter, who had had the office of Queen's counsel "thrust upon him." At length, suppressing a rising smile, but fearing at the same time to open his mouth, lest, instead of a learned trope, a horse-laugh should burst forth from it, he mumbled out a few words, stopped, scratched his head, looked up to the sky, but not deriving any inspiration from the clouds, cast an appealing glance at the earth, with as little success; he then threw a glance at the frowning judge, and in a fit of despair exclaimed—"You, my lord judge, and men of the jury, know, as well as I can tell you, that this confounded old fool of a tailor, the prisoner at the bar, is brought here to be tried for snoring in his bed after four o'clock on the morning of Easter-Monday, and I have several witnesses here to prove it. That's my case, my lord judge."

And the Queen's counsel, after nodding most familiarly to "my lord judge," seated himself on a large uneasy-looking stone.

"I am the principal witness against the lazy, old vagabond," cried Evan, bustling forward, and speaking rapidly in Welsh, with as important an air, and as earnest a manner, as he could possibly have worn in a real court of justice.

John the carpenter arose from his stony seat; and after old Evan had promised to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," John demanded of him if he had actually heard the tailor snore.

"Yes, indeed; I will take my oath I did; it was a sound like this he made;" and old Evan uttered sundry nasal sounds, that startled both judge and jury.

"You lying old villain," exclaimed the tailor's wife, bursting through the crowd; "may you fall from the top of Penmaen Mawr and break your worthless neck, for saying such a thing. Why, my poor old husband has been ill these six weeks, and has not strength to snore louder than a new-born baby."

Silence was called in vain ; the woman persisted in being heard. At length the judge rose majestically from his seat, and said—“I should just as soon expect an ass to refrain from braying at my request, as that an angry woman would keep silent ; therefore, Mr. Sheriff's officer, follow the advice of a fool for once, and let yonder termagant talk on ; passion will choke her, or her breath fail her before long.”

The fury, nothing daunted, looked at the judge, and gave vent to her indignation in no measured terms, but he took no further notice of her, and amused himself with moving his head from side to side, so as to keep time with the bells in his cap to her denunciations, were they uttered in a quick or slow tone. At length, finding she was not likely to excite pity by her “much speaking,” she burst into tears of rage, and withdrew ; the luckless tailor cast a most doleful look after her ; indeed, so miserable did he appear, that most probably the hearts of more than one of his

tormentors would have softened towards him had he been a knight of any calling save that of the shears. Silence being at last obtained, old Evan was again called forward, and his evidence clearly proved that the prisoner was an apprentice of Somnus, as well as of the Tailors' Company. Much amusement was called forth by the grave, business-like manner in which old Evan went through his cross-questioning by the counsel for the prisoner; not a smile was to be seen on his countenance, and had the tailor committed murder, he could not have looked more solemnly anxious to prove his guilt. The counsel for the defendant (Owen Griffith) found it no easy task to say anything that would create an interest in favour of a tailor; three times did he commence a speech that was drowned in three times three repeated groans, and cries of Goose, Goose, Goose—Cabbage, Cabbage, Cabbage, from the mob. Silence! silence! was called for in vain; and, though Owen Griffith spread forth his right hand, and then

his left, clasped them together, threw them as wide apart as if he had wished to exemplify the north and south pole, and then, as suddenly as he had separated them, clasped them together again on his heart, and shouted and bawled till he was quite exhausted,—he was obliged to sit down; and, as he wiped the perspiration from his shining red face, to acknowledge to himself that he had heated and tired himself in vain, for that not one word that he had uttered had been heard. Several witnesses were called by the tailor; but their evidence only served to prove his guilt even more unequivocally than any evidence brought forward by Evan.

The judge, in the same pompous tone and aconic style in which he had delivered his charge to the jury, summed up the case. The jury remained for some time in deep consultation, the prisoner at the bar watching their countenances all the while with an expression of grim dismay. At length the foreman of the jury came forward, and nodding familiarly

at the judge, said—"My lord, we find the tailor guilty a little bit."

Silence being obtained, the judge commanded the prisoner at the bar to stand up, and addressed to him the following words:—

"Old snip, great as is the offence against the laws of Easter-day which has been clearly proved that you have been guilty of, in consideration of your being only the ninth part of a man, I shall act the merciful judge, and I shall mitigate your punishment, and instead of ordering you to be shut up for a week in a well-guarded room, with no companion save your wife, I shall condemn you to be carried, on the shoulders of two men, six times round the town of Conway, the last ride to terminate opposite the stocks, in which you are to pass the remainder of the day; and may this gentle punishment cure you of snoring."

As speedily as if Lynch law was understood in Conway was the punishment inflicted upon the hapless culprit; it was rendered, however, more tolerable to him by the kindness of Howel

Llewelyn, who took him a large horn of strong ale, and stood by to see that he was allowed to drink it in peace; his tormentors, as if envying him this unexpected turn of good luck, had collected together his goose, and all the other implements of his trade, and hung them about his person. He was followed in his circuit of the town by a crowd of men and boys, who hooted and hurrahd — by women and children, who laughed and screamed, and by dogs that barked, and pigs that squeaked. At length the prisoner was safely and securely shut up in the stocks.

The judge, still attired in his cap, wig, and gown, now, "with solemn step and slow," might be seen advancing; he took the hand of the tailor, and in a pompous voice demanded if he liked ale better than butter-milk?

"Yes, sure," sighed forth the tailor.

"Alas!" said the judge, echoing back the sigh, "I fear you are a sad drunken vagabond,

and must therefore be punished. Come hither, officer, and pour a large jug of cold water down his throat; it will cool it."

The unresisting victim took the jug, and swallowed the cooling draught with the same look of disgust that he would have exhibited had it been the most nauseous draught ever concocted in an apothecary's shop.

"Would you rather be kissed by that pretty girl to your left, or by your wife?" was the next question asked by the judge.

"Well, indeed, by my wife."

"Come hither, Betty Edwards," called out the judge, in the tone of one "accustomed to command." A very old, very dirty, and decrepit hag answered to the summons; she was "sans teeth, sans eyes, sans everything" but what rendered her an object of disgust to all who beheld her.

"Here, Betty," continued the judge, "this tailor prefers an old woman's kiss to that of a pretty young girl's; kiss him—kiss him to his heart's content."

"Oh, save me, save me!" cried the miserable tailor, throwing himself back till his head touched the ground; and, as the frightful old hag drew nearer to him, his struggles and cries for help became louder and louder still; but when she actually stooped over the stocks, and her withered lips were on the point of touching his cheek, in an agony of horror he buried his face in his hands. Howel, though a smile was on his lips, yet, compassionating the poor man's accumulating miseries, whispered a few cabalistical words in the old woman's ear, and before her lips had contaminated the cheeks of the tailor, she suddenly withdrew from the stocks, and neither the entreaties or threats of the mob would induce her to return to the attack. But Howel speedily silenced the murmurs that were beginning to arise at what was looked upon as a "breach of privilege," by informing the mob that an excellent barrel of ale had been tapped that morning at the Llewelyn Arms, and that every man present was welcome to

adjourn there, and to drink a horn of ale to the health of the tailor, the victim of their morning's amusement. This was most unexpected and agreeable news, and the welkin rang with shouts of "Long live Llewelyn of the Glyn!" In less than five minutes the street, that had been so lately crowded with hundreds of men and boys, was deserted by all, with the exception of the judge, Herbert, Howel, and the captive in the stocks. Howel, the instant the coast was clear, liberated him from "durance vile;" and shaking him by his trembling hand, bade him begone and get drunk at any "public" in the town he pleased, at the expense of the house of Llewelyn. Gladstone threw him a crown piece, and the late frightened, angry, and crest-fallen tailor, sneaked off, if not a better, a richer and a happier man.

"Well and kindly done, my masters," said Billy Bangor; "but now, had I set yonder poor wretch at liberty, I should only have been called a fool for my pains; and fool as I

am, I am not fool enough to waste my time talking with you, when good ale is only waiting to be drank. But hark you, my lord fopling," he continued, addressing himself to Gladstone, "though you wear a dress that a hundred years hence, should it be preserved so long, may lead people to imagine that you were my twin brother, yet I find it covers a kind heart; and therefore, if your friend here will bring you to see our fine old hall at Mostyn, you shall have such welcome as a fool can offer."

"I thank you in both our names," said Howel, laughing, "for your invitation, good fool; but Master Gladstone must, before he pays you a visit at the hall of Mostyns of Mostyn, first see the still more ancient and beautiful one of the Llewelyns of Glyn Llewelyn,—my father's hall!"

"Well, I do own, 'my father's hall,'" replied Billy Bangor, imitating well the proud look and tone with which Howel had uttered these words, "is more ancient, ah! and more

beautiful than that at Mostyn." He paused an instant, and then, with a look of mingled cunning and drollery, added, "such at least it appears to be in the eyes of a fool!"

Without waiting for an answer, he sprang with the agility of a harlequin and all the contortions of countenance of a clown, over the back of a pony that was fastened to the door-post of a house, and was soon seated amongst the merriest revellers of the Llewelyn Arms. Howel and Gladstone walked off in an opposite direction towards Plas Conway, quite satisfied with the part they had already played in the festivities of Easter-day.

CHAPTER III.

This hour we dedicate to joy,
Then fill the Hirlas horn, my boy,
That shineth like the sea;
Whose azure handles, tipp'd with gold,
Invites the grasp of Briton's bold,—
The sons of liberty.

"GLADSTONE, I fear, will describe us as a sad set of savages," observed Howel to Eva, as they were walking together on the evening of Easter Monday; "though, to do him justice, he entered into all the sports of the morning with great spirit."

"Let him have a care how he speaks ill of his betters," replied Eva, with a smile. "But

he is too warm-hearted and generous himself, not to admire our countrymen ; and as for our countrywomen, mark my words, he will leave his heart a present to one of them."

"Provided you do not make him a present of yours, dear Eva, as a compensation for his loss, I will kindly give him leave to dispose of his to any lady in the principality. But I think I am growing a little jealous of him, and shall carry him off in a day or two to Glyn Llewelyn."

We will leave Eva and Howel to pursue their walk alone, and state a few particulars relative to the inhabitants of Plas Conway, which will throw some light on matters closely connected with this history.

Mrs. Wynn, who in years gone by had been "a pennyless lass with a long pedigree," had won the heart of Colonel Wynn — a brave and noble soldier possessed of a large estate—less by the beauty of her face and figure (though both might have excited a look of admiration from a stoic), than by the sweet-

ness of her manners, and the amiableness of her disposition. Colonel Wynn, with the feeling of loyalty that warmed every generous heart in North Wales, had in early life attached himself to the evil fortunes of the unhappy Charles I. He had not only striven to support the king's tottering cause with his wisdom and his valour, but also with his purse; and after his beloved master's murder, that purse was still heavily taxed to supply the numerous demands made on it by that monarch's heartless and profligate son. Charles II., on his restoration, entreated Colonel Wynn's presence at court; holding out at the same time promises of high reward for his long-tried and disinterested services. Colonel Wynn returned for answer, that he was sufficiently requited by seeing him on the throne of his father; and requested that, now that his sword could be of no further service to the house of Stuart, he might be allowed to turn it into a ploughshare, and spend the remainder of his days in country retirement.

Charles II., happy to have one petitioner the less for rewards and honours he never intended to bestow, did not importune the Colonel to change his mind, but left him in unmolested enjoyment of rural happiness. Years rolled on, and his very existence had probably been forgotten by the volatile monarch, when it was suddenly recalled to his mind by the Colonel appearing at court. But when Charles discovered that he had no favour to ask, and that duty to his sovereign alone brought him there, most overpoweringly flattering and gracious was the reception he received; nor did the royal favour shine less brightly upon him after his youthful and very pretty bride had been presented at court. Business of a very important nature had called Colonel Wynn to London immediately after his marriage, and a wish to gratify his bride by a transient view of its sights and wonders, was not to be overcome by all the manifold and prudent reasons brought forth against the scheme by his good and sensible

aunt Elizabeth. In vain did she thank Heaven that she had never been in London—never had her mind corrupted by its iniquities—never had her love for home shaken by its idle dissipations: but all aunt Elizabeth's arguments (though she was soothed by hearing that they were remarkably sensible) proved vain; and she hung over her unfortunate niece, as she styled her, on the morning on which she was to set off for London, and blessed her with as much solemn misery as if she had been going to the scaffold. But no close carriage; no vehicle of any description, however humble, awaited the pleasure of the bride; though several saddle horses, of which more than one bore a pillion, might be seen standing under the ancient stone gateway. A remarkable fine charger of Colonel Wynn's, that, though many years had passed over his head, could number twice as many battles in which he had been engaged, stood conspicuously forward. He was much more gaily caparisoned than the other horses; and

though he was one of the number that bore a pillion, it was quite evident that this circumstance, instead of detracting from his consequence, was a mark of high honour: for the new pillion, and gaily-worked saddlecloth beneath it, showed that the pillion and horse were to share between them the honour of bearing the bride of Colonel Wynn to London. Quickly were all the preparations for the journey finished: several large saddle-bags containing luggage, and baskets well filled with provisions, were strapped on the back of a powerful horse, which was led by the colonel's serving-man; behind whom rode Mrs. Wynn's tire-woman. The fine soldier-like form of the colonel, offered a beautiful contrast to that of his slight and delicate bride, whom he lifted up in his arms, and seated on her pillion, with as little exertion as he could have used had she been a child; he then sprung into his saddle, and called to the remainder of the party to follow him, whilst he led the way down a steep and pathless glen.

Catherine Tudor, a younger sister of Mrs. Wynn's, formed one of this party of equestrians, and was mounted on a pillion behind our old acquaintance Evan. And thus mounted and attended did the bride of the rich and powerful Colonel Wynn set out on a journey that it would take a fortnight to accomplish. Aunt Elizabeth, or Betty, as she was generally called, stood under the gateway watching the cavalcade, with tears in her eyes, uttering fervent prayers that her dear relations might arrive in safety at the end of their dreadful journey, and that her beautiful niece might not return home utterly corrupted by the wicked London ladies.

At this period inns were not to be met with in Wales, except in large towns; and as the road taken by our travellers led them through a wild and mountainous part of the country, where there was little chance of falling in with even a large village, this circumstance might have obliged them to hold a much more rigid fast than would have proved agreeable to good

protestant appetites; but such was the hospitality of the country, that the most perfect stranger, be he peer or peasant, was sure of a welcome at any house at which he might request a night's lodging. Our travellers arrived safe and well in Shrewsbury. As long as they were even on the borders of Wales, aunt Elizabeth looked upon them as in the land of the living; but after they left Shrewsbury, she said, with deep-drawn sighs and bitter tears, "I give them up for lost—I shall never see any of them again—they will be robbed and murdered long before they get to that horrid London."

The sad forebodings of aunt Elizabeth did not come to pass in their fullest extent; but more than once were the lives of the travellers endangered by the pistols of daring highwaymen, and much anxiety had arisen to Colonel and Mrs. Wynn, from a dread that Evan and his fair companion were lost to them for ever. Evan had in his boyhood followed the fortunes of his master, and had travelled over as many

highways and byways, he was frequently in the habit of saying, as any man in England; but his knowledge of byways on the present occasion was very near proving a byway to death to Catherine Tudor; for assuring her he knew a much better and shorter road to Coventry than the one his master had taken, he turned so suddenly round a corner into a narrow lane that she had neither time to remonstrate or inform Colonel Wynn of his intention. The lane, dirty and uninviting at the commencement, grew dirtier every step they advanced, and at length the horse sunk above his knees in a thick sticky bath of most unsavoury black-looking mud, from which he was either unwilling or unable to stir; whip, spurs, oaths, and curses were all resorted to by Evan, with the same want of success. Catherine Tudor, a mountain maiden, and accustomed to dangerous paths from her childhood, laughed at first; but when she found that the horse was sinking still lower in the mud, and that, in another instant, it would reach the

saddle, she ceased to laugh, and began to consider what was to be done to save man, woman, and horse from so foul and ignominious a death. From Evan neither advice nor comfort could be gathered; his whole thoughts were fixed upon an impossibility he was determined to make his unhappy horse move; and to effect this he redoubled his whipping, spurring, oaths, and curses. Hear it not, ye society for the suppression of vice! but one fearful oath, uttered in his native tongue, effected what nothing else would have done,—it brought prompt and powerful succour. The servant who had charge of the luggage had stopped at an inn by the way-side, being weary and athirst; and as he was riding quickly forward to join his master, on passing by the head of the lane, he was not a little startled and surprised to hear his native language uttered at a short distance from him, in neither a mild nor godly manner. Curiosity, united to the fear that a countryman was suffering bodily wrong, induced him to ride down the

uninviting lane; and he had not proceeded far when, to his surprise and horror, he beheld, as he imagined, Evan, Catherine Tudor, and their horse slowly, but surely, sinking into the earth. Lady, man, and horse were at length liberated from this most unromantic situation, with the loss of a slipper on the part of Catherine Tudor, and of his temper on that of Evan; nor did the rebukes he received from Colonel Wynn, and the laughter with which he was assailed by the rest of the party, aid in restoring it to him.

After Colonel Wynn had finished the business that took him to London, aunt Elizabeth could not have been more anxious for him to quit it than he felt himself. Having heard that his king had expressed very violent admiration of Mrs. Wynn's beauty, he immediately determined upon returning home, thinking that mountain air would aid in preserving her bloom and his peace of mind; and in less than two months from the day on which aunt Elizabeth had bid them adieu with sighs and tears, she had the

speedily followed by that of her second to a Mr. Lloyd; who, as he was descended from a Royal tribe, and, like Dogberry, had everything handsome about him, met with her entire approbation. Castell Craig devolved on Mrs. Fitzmaurice on her coming of age, and Mrs. Wynn immediately removed to Plas Conway, and gave up her whole time and attention to completing the education of Eva, who was several years younger than her sisters.

Aunt Elizabeth, who was still living, accompanied Mrs. Wynn to Conway; and most peacefully would the good old lady's days have rolled on, but for the education of Eva. It was a never-ending still-beginning subject of distress: "the poor dear girl would be entirely ruined,—mark her words. What would follow her learning to dance in Chester? Why she would tramp after some play-acting fellow or other. She had never been taught to dance; not she; and yet, old as she was, she should not be afraid to step it away for the best with any young girl in Conway. And

where had she learned her steps? Why at wakes and fairs, in her younger days; and nobody, who had the use of their eyes and feet, required any more teaching. And as to her niece Wynn making the poor child read all sorts of strange books, she wondered at her; and she was quite certain, that to be able to read your bible, and to write your name, instead of making a cross, when you signed to your marriage register, was all that was required from a Christian gentlewoman. And then the outlandish songs and dances she had picked up in London, were only fit to be sung or danced by those who were no better than they ought to be." But the same fate awaited aunt Betsy's good advice as on the memorable journey to London: it was listened to, but not followed. Mrs. Wynn continued her own system of education; and aunt Elizabeth was at length heard to acknowledge that "the girl was a very good girl, and as industrious and obedient, and as fond of reading her bible, as she could have been had she

never been in London, or learned to dance." And when aunt Betsy's eyesight suddenly failed her, and Eva sat for hours at a time reading a homily or the bible to her, she was obliged to confess that it was nice to be able to read well, and that the chapter did sound much better when you were not obliged to stop and spell the long words. Poor good aunt Elizabeth died just as Eva's education was completed, and she was considered of an age to write her name in the marriage register, if she felt inclined. Nor were solicitations that she would do so slow in coming; for there were quite as many gentlemen of high degree and fair estate, ready to risk life and limb to win the love of the pretty heiress of Plas Conway, as there had previously been to obtain that of her sisters. But Eva had either less faith in lover's vows, or no wish to change her single blessedness "for a name and for a ring;" for no Cheshire gentleman, Shropshire esquire, or Lancashire knight, found favour in her sight. Nor did "the merchants of Beau-

maris, the lawyers of Caernarvon, or the gentlemen of Conway" find cause to exult in their better success; and more than one disappointed suitor had condemned her "to lead apes in hell," when rumour, with her many tongues, spread far and wide the news that she had been wooed and won by young Llewelyn of the Glyn. Never was an engagement entered upon by youth and maiden under more favourable auspices. Relations were delighted, and friends approved. Old Mr. Llewelyn, though a very rich man, thought it very desirable that his son should be still richer; times were changing; it was quite right that Howel should marry an heiress, for show and waste that were unheard of in his younger days were creeping into fashion; and had Howel only what his father would be able to leave him, and should he have a large family, why he would feel himself a poor man before he died. "But," said Llewelyn of the Glyn, as he was called, grasping his son's hand, "remember, my dear boy,

should the sea some stormy night wash away all Eva's possessions, that she will be as dear to your mother and to me being your wife, as if she had brought with her all the wealth and all the lands of her late worthy father."

Howel could not find any words at this instant with which he might express his thanks to his kind father. He commenced several speeches, but was obliged to break off in the middle; and at last observed with a laugh,—"Whatever other evils we may have to fear, that of losing Eva's estate by a flood, is the last that need disturb our rest, for her lands are at least thirty miles from the sea."

"Yes, very true," said Llewelyn of the Glyn, laughing in his turn. "And now, Howel," he added, "go and tell Eva Wynn how much pleased your mother and I are at the prospect of having her for a daughter; and that, if I had not been already provided with a wife, I should have been happy to have married her myself."

Mrs. Wynn, we strongly suspect, was

almost as well pleased at Eva being an heiress as Mr. Llewelyn; for although she felt convinced that Howel loved her child, and would have married her had she been penniless; yet the knowledge that her possessing not only beauty, talents, and noble birth, but also "gold in store," rendered her a fitting bride for the most high and mighty in the land, filled her heart with pride: but as it was the pride of an affectionate mother, we hope it may be forgiven. Howel was not, at this period, of age; it was therefore unanimously decided that his marriage should not take place for a year or two, and that he could not employ his time better than in seeing something more of men and manners than he seemed likely to do in his father's hall. A life of inactivity he strongly objected to; and he at length prevailed upon his mother to allow him to join the army, then waging a most successful war in France under the command of the Duke of Marlborough.

Such was the state of affairs when Herbert

Gladstone arrived at Plas Conway. Here say we nought of the frequent visits paid by Herbert to the fine old castle; for it has been visited during the last twenty years by so many thousands of persons, and described by such a countless host of pens, that we feel there is nothing left for us to say on the subject. Herbert passed a fortnight at Plas Conway, and was surprised to find how pleasantly and quickly the time had flown. He had promised Howel to accompany him back to the Glyn; the day was at length named for their departure; and as soon as dinner was despatched, Howel became anxious to set off, observing that they had a long walk and a very steep mountain to encounter. But, anxious as Howel had been to set off, Herbert had given his orders twice over to old Evan, lest some important article of dress should be omitted to be packed up—had heard one of his long stories, that invariably commenced with something to the praise and glory of Colonel Wynn, but ended with his own praises and

glory—had taken leave of his aunt and Eva, and yet Howel lingered by the side of the latter, and still found some important nothing to detain him there, even after Herbert was fairly out of the house, and waiting for him in the street. The impatient “come, Llewelyn, come,” had been repeated more than once, before Llewelyn thought fit to answer to the summons, but at last he joined the restless Herbert, who was pacing before the door in double quick time. The pedestrians soon left the town of Conway far behind them, and were commencing the toilsome ascent that was to lead them to the top of a mountain called Sycknant. Howel, accustomed from his childhood to paths where nothing but a goat or a mountaineer would have dared to stray, walked briskly and merrily on; quite unconscious that the stones which were perpetually rolling under his feet, and the huge masses of dark rock above his head—that looked as if a breeze of wind would loosen them from the side of the mountain and

crush him to palpable powder—interfered with the pleasure of Herbert's walk. But the steep and grim-looking ascent was at length mastered; and Herbert, after recovering his breath, was on the point of expressing his satisfaction at having been able to keep pace with a hardy mountaineer, when he was struck dumb by the sight of the fearful road that lay before him. His manhood forbade it, or gladly would he have wished Howel good evening, and retraced his steps to Plas Conway; and yet Herbert Gladstone was no coward; but, as he laughingly observed, he could not, like Howel's countryman, "call spirits from the vasty deep" to catch him, should he fall over the fearful precipice on his right hand, into the sea, therefore he might be forgiven for wishing for a more inland path.

The path was so narrow that it was but just practicable for two persons to walk abreast; but Howel seized the arm of his friend, and, giving him the benefit of the wall of mountain on the left side, walked himself on the

very edge of the path—that overhung a perpendicular precipice, from which but few eyes could have gazed upon the scene below without a sensation of giddiness—with as much unconcern as if he had been walking through a broad valley. He pointed out different mountains and glens, and mentioned their names, and the traditional histories attached to them, with an enthusiasm that, at any other time or place, would have amused Herbert; but the road appeared to grow narrower, and the loose rolling stones to increase in size and number; and being apprehensive of hearing his friend's last dying speech, he kept his lips tightly pressed together, and walked on with the agreeable conviction on his mind, that one false step on the part of Howel, or even an involuntary movement on his, would either send them into a fathomless grave in the sea, or consign them to a still more fearful and lingering death on the sharp pointed rocks, which were raising their heads some hundreds of feet below them.

The deep wild scream of the gull, Howel declared, suited well with the scenery that surrounded them; but it awoke different feelings in the heart of Gladstone, who fancied that the sea-gull screamed, and the cormorant rejoiced, in the hope of having them speedily for their prey; and when, at length, Howel declared that the remainder of their walk was over level ground, Herbert felt as well pleased as if he had been a sea-tired passenger, and had heard the joyous cry of "land, land!" It was as lovely an evening as ever delighted the eyes or gladdened the heart of man; and now that Gladstone no longer stood in dread of being either drowned or impaled upon the rocks, he looked around him with delight, listening most complacently to Howel's traditionary lore, and even cast a backward glance at Penmaen Mawr, without bestowing a benediction on it. But it was not without a shudder that he learned from Howel, that accidents frequently had occurred to luckless travellers when attempt-

ing to cross it; and that only a few weeks back, one Sion Humphries had fallen down the precipice, yet, wonderful to relate, he not only lived "to tell the tale," but escaped with a few slight bruises; "and he is now," said Howel, smiling, "sufficiently recovered to be married to a young woman with whom he had made an appointment at the fair at Conway, when he met with this awful fall, instead of his own true love."

"Indeed," replied Herbert, laughingly, "if such a fall could not shake love out of his heart, his bride has little cause to fear that any thing else will ever dislodge it."

Though the way was long, and its solitude unbroken by the form of man, woman, or child, yet Gladstone made no complaints of the length of the walk, or the absence of "the human face divine;" his whole mind was engrossed by admiration not unmixed with awe, called forth by the grim majesty of the Alpine scenery that bounded his view to the left, and offered a no less striking than pleasing contrast

to the calm, clear, and deep blue waves of the Menai Straits, and the richly wooded shore of Anglesea, that was glowing with the beams of a gorgeous sun-set. Though no human form crossed the path of our traveller, still the fisher was out on "the sunny sea," and boats and vessels of various sizes, with sails of various shapes and colours, were to be seen making their rapid way before the evening breeze to Bangor or Beaumaris, giving life and animation to the scene.

At length our pedestrians reached the Glen, or Glyn, as it was styled, in which stood the home of Howel Llewelyn. A few miserable looking huts, built of sods and with turf roofs, having a hole left in the middle to allow the blinding smoke to escape, lay scattered around. Herbert looked earnestly at them, but could not discover that the most imposing dwelling in the group could boast of either a chimney or a window; but he observed to Howel,—on passing a party of healthy, handsome, and laughing children, who were playing about

nearly in a state of nature,—“smoke and poverty are apparently no impediments to health and happiness.”

Although squalid poverty and miserable cottages were to be seen even at the gates of royal palaces at this period, yet Herbert had never beheld huts of so savage-like an appearance as those he had just passed; and as he found that they were occupied by some of the dependants of the Llewelyn family, he was little prepared for the sight of the fine old mansion that, on suddenly turning a corner, burst upon his view. Century after century had rolled over it, and yet had worked as little change in its massive walls as in the mountains that towered above it. It was situated at the entrance of a deep and fertile glen, which ran far up into the mountains; and the solemn stillness that reigned around, broken only by the gentle dash of the waves against the rocky shore, accorded well with its grey and monastic appearance. It was built in the Gothic style of architecture; and occupied, with its outbuild-

ings—which ran parallel with it so as to form three sides of a square—more than an acre of ground; the fourth side of the square being occupied by curiously-worked iron gates, supported by massive stone columns, on the flattened tops of which stood a stag, which was “spreading his broad nostrils to the wind.” With no small portion of ingenuity, into each pointed compartment of the gates, the arms or crest of the Llewelyns had been introduced; the latter being the aforementioned stag. A very broad and straight walk divided the mathematically square garden, and led to the door of the hall. The garden was laid out in oblong, round, and triangular beds; which, more fortunate than Castor and Pollux, had their twin brothers constantly facing them on the opposite side of the walk. A handsome flight of stone steps, guarded by stags, led on both sides to long, formal terraces, adorned with peacocks and various other birds and beasts—for which the most learned naturalist of the day would have been sorely puzzled to have

found "a local habitation or a name"—cut out of box or yew trees. The same regard to strict uniformity had been observed with birds and beasts as with the flower-beds; and, as the numerous pairs stood side by side, it might have been imagined that they were waiting for Noah's command to walk into the ark. At the extremity of the terrace to the left of the house, seated in a chair of yew, was a female figure adorned with an enormous hat, and busily employed in knitting. Few persons would now willingly sacrifice a beautiful tree to form a grotesque figure; but at this period nature was looked upon as an interloper in a flower garden; and numbers of persons, who would bestow only a momentary glance at the fine old mansion, would stand, and look and admire, and express their astonishment at the marvellous skill exhibited by Griffith Lloyd, the old gardener, not only in shaping the lady, chair and all, with his knife, but in having metamorphosed a still larger yew tree into a knight and horse: the knight held in his hand

an immensely long spear, and spent his time in tilting with the air. Remarkably high and closely-shorn holly-hedges terminated the boundaries of the terraces, and formed beautiful screens to the extensive out-buildings that ran parallel with them.

"We have stabling here for a hundred horses, and rooms for as many men above," said Howel, "and seldom, in my grandfather's days, were either stalls or rooms unoccupied; he lived in stirring times, and when he marched out to battle a hundred men were always left behind to guard the place."

"And well did it deserve to be protected," exclaimed Herbert in a tone of enthusiasm; "for who would not gladly shed the last drop of his blood in defence of such a fine old place?"

Howel, at this instant, opened wide the massive entrance door, and bade Herbert welcome to the hall of the Llewelyns.

"Pity 'tis, 'tis pity," that many a hall, as worthy of being recorded by the pen of the

traveller or novelist, should, during this enlightened century, have been allowed to become the abode of the toad; or, more melancholy still, have been let to a farmer, who has converted it into a barn, where the noisy flail, and still noisier thrashing machine, echo through the vaulted roof, which in a bygone age rung with the wild strains of the harp—

“ While gifted bards, a rival throng,
To crown the banquet’s solemn close,
Themes of British glory chose.”

But we must return to Glyn Llewelyn, and endeavour to describe this fine specimen of the halls of our ancestors. Its antiquity was clearly proved by the dais, or high place, at the upper end of it, on which stood a curiously-carved oak table; whilst below the dais, at the western side of the hall, a table of much humbler workmanship was placed. Three lofty Gothic windows, slightly mullioned, and with trefoil heads, gave light to this side of the hall; whilst an oriel window, ornamented with

stone work that might have been wrought by the Tylwyth Tég (or the fair family), with which superstition had peopled the Glyn, looked out to the north. The lofty roof was formed of timber, ornamented with bold and beautiful designs in oak; and many a strain of mirth had echoed through the skilfully-carved arches that supported the centre. The spacious chimney was ornamented with a flat Tudor arch of oak, on which the arms of the Llewelyns were emblazoned. "The idle spear and shield were high up hung," on walls from which were suspended ancient banners, well-hacked helmets, "and bucklers that had borne many shrewd blows."

Nor were proofs wanting that the Llewelyns had been mighty hunters, not only of men but of beasts; for many a noble trophy of the chase was to be seen mixed with broad sword, ancient dagger, and pike. At the upper end of the room stood an eagle, chained to a log of wood; and so well did he mimic life, that it was not till strangers had approached him and

touched his feathers, that they could be convinced that he did not breathe or move. He had been taken from his nest, when barely fledged, by Howel; and had long lived a pensioner on his bounty, after he had become so fierce as to be unapproachable by any other member of the family. At some distance from the eagle, stood a stag in an erect posture, admirably carved in oak, and supporting between his fore feet a banner, on which was worked the arms of the family. Basking in the beams of the evening sun, that streamed through the western windows, lay three greyhounds, who, on hearing the footsteps of a stranger, raised their snake-like heads, but on perceiving that Howel accompanied him, they lay down again, shaking their ears and wagging their tails in token of recognition. On a high-backed and curiously-carved chair of oak, at a short distance from the greyhounds, sat a most venerable-looking old man, his withered hand resting on a tripple-stringed harp that stood by his side. "Time had not thinned his

flowing hair ;" but had changed it from raven-black to silvery-grey. His head was slightly bent forward, as if he were sleeping, and exhibited, to great advantage, his high and intellectual forehead. On Howel's approaching him, he started to his feet, and bowed low and respectfully to Gladstone.

"This, Gladstone," said Howel, laying his hand affectionately on the old man's shoulder, "is Roderic, the tried and faithful friend of our house during three generations; and he boasts," he continued, with a smile, "of a pedigree as long—aye, and as noble too—as our own."

The old man looked at Howel with almost parental fondness, and spoke a few words in Welsh, which Gladstone rightly interpreted into thanks for the well-timed praise bestowed on him by his young master. At Herbert's request, Roderic played a lively air, which filled the hearts of the listeners with mirth and gladness. He suddenly paused, and

then ran over the strings with a brilliant prelude,

“And with a master's hand
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre ;”

playing, as only a true-born Briton could have played it, Morva Rhuddlan (the lament for Rhuddlan). The last mournful echo had died away, and still Herbert stood gazing at the old harper like one entranced. So completely had he been absorbed by the wild beauty of the strains to which he had been listening, that he was quite unconscious that a fourth person had joined the group ; and consequently, on at length raising his eyes, he was not a little astonished to encounter those of a very young and Hebe-like girl, who was evidently gazing at him with no small degree of curiosity, mixed with admiration.

“This young lady, by name Wenefrede, has the honour of calling me brother,” said Howel ; “and I need not tell her to bid one of the name of Gladstone welcome.”

Few persons could have done so with greater simplicity and warmth of heart; and as she held out a plump, dimpled white hand to Herbert, expressing, at the same time, her pleasure at seeing her brother's friend, he felt that there was a charm in unsophisticated manners that the highest polish might fail to obtain; and he bowed low, and kissed the pretty little hand he still held in his, somewhat more fervently than if it had been presented to him to kiss by his sovereign lady, "good Queen Anne." Wenefrede quickly withdrew her hand, and blushing and smiling at London manners, tripped merrily down the hall, to apprise her mother of the arrival of the handsome stranger.

Howel and Gladstone quickly followed her; the former having learned from Roderic that Mr. Llewelyn was in his sanctum sanctorum, as he was pleased to call it—though the smoking room was the less-classical name given to it by most of his household. On first opening the door, nothing was dis-

tinctly visible, so completely was the room darkened by the smoke from several pipes; but Mr. Llewelyn, on hearing the voice of his son, laid down his pipe, as did likewise three men (gentlemen, Herbert thought, would be a very inappropriate term for them, though, in truth, they were small country esquires), who were sitting around an oak table, on which stood drinking cups, and an enormous black jug, containing ale. The smoke having dispersed, and Herbert having gone through the ceremony of an introduction to Mr. Llewelyn — his shoulder being dislocated by the friendly shake of the hand he gave him, and exposed three times over to the like danger from the little less-cordial grasp of Mr. Roberts, Mr. Jones, and Mr. Williams — he had time to look around him. The room contained nothing in the shape of furniture, except the table already named, and a few chairs. But the walls and corners were ornamented with guns, hunting-whips, fishing-tackle, foxes' brushes, and the

antlers of stags and many foreign beasts of chase ; a very beautifully - stuffed falcon , which occupied one of the many corners (for the room was of an octangular shape), served as a peg on which to hang Mr. Llewelyn's broad-brimmed hat ; whilst an old hunting-coat was thrown over the back of a stuffed puffin, that stood in another nook ; and a massive pair of silver spurs hung around the neck of a cormorant, who looked amazingly puffed up by the honour that had been " thrust upon him." Several live greyhounds lay stretched in happy idleness before a turf fire. The singular beauty of one of them attracted the notice of Gladstone, and he pointed it out to Mr. Llewelyn ; who replied, " We have an old Welsh proverb, which I translate for your benefit, Master Gladstone ; it says, that a gentleman may be known by his hawk, his horse, and his greyhound. Now," said he, laughing good humouredly, " I think, if you judge me by my greyhound,

that you will own that I am a very pretty gentleman, indeed."

Mr. Llewelyn, who had been sitting with his back to the fire, now turned towards it, and began to expatiate, with an ardour incomprehensible to any person but a sportsman, not only on the beauty of his favourite dog, whose head was resting on his knee, but on the great superiority of his whole breed of greyhounds over any other gentleman's in Carnarvonshire—Anglesea and Denbighshire to boot. All he advanced on the subject was confirmed by the "yes, sure," and "well, indeed, it is quite true" of Mr. Williams, who did not possess a greyhound; but Messieurs Roberts and Jones, who did, appeared much less inclined to acknowledge the boasted superiority. But during the long discussion that followed, touching the respective merits of their dogs, Herbert had an opportunity of observing, by the light of a blazing turf-fire, the form and features of Mr. Llewelyn. In person he was tall, his chest remarkably

broad, his neck long and thick; but age and *cwrw da* had added considerable rotundity to a figure that in youth had been athletic, but not fat. His complexion was clear and florid, his eye a light grey, yet "full, bright, and keen;" his face and forehead broad, his mouth large, but well shaped, and ornamented with strong white teeth. His countenance was, perhaps, more expressive of good-humour and conviviality than of strong intellect.

The greyhounds were still a subject of discussion, when a door (for there were several in the room) opened, and a lady entered, attired in a costume that, though handsome and expensive, Herbert recognised as belonging to a by-gone age. She looked so lively, young, and fair, that Herbert imagined she must be an elder sister of Howel's, of whom he thought he had heard him speak; therefore, great was his surprise when Howel led him up to her and said,—“my mother.” Mrs. Llewelyn was short, “fat, fair,” but not forty

She had a very pretty youthful face, and looked an epitome of good humour and content; her countenance and manner told you, as plainly as if her voice had uttered it, that she had been attended through life by three of its choicest blessings, health, affluence, and domestic bliss. Not less cordial—though it did not leave quite so lasting an impression as that of Mr. Llewelyn—was the shake of the hand his wife bestowed upon Herbert; who, accustomed to the formal manners and selfish hearts too often to be met with in a court circle, felt gratified and surprised at the friendly and warm-hearted tone of his reception.

Mr. Jones now prepared to take his departure, observing that the sun was setting, and that he had a long dreary walk across the mountains, before him.

“You must not go before supper,” exclaimed Mr. and Mrs. Llewelyn, at the same instant; but in spite of all remonstrances and entreaties to the contrary, Mr. Jones, like the

frog in the song, "took up his hat and wished them good-night."

"Poor man, poor man!" said Mr. Llewelyn, in a compassionate tone, and shaking his head; "he would like to have stayed, but he did not dare: he had not had leave from that black-eyed vixen of a wife of his. If she were mine, I'd soon teach her better manners — bring her to her senses, as they say Davies of Bangor did his jade of a wife, by the smack of his hunting-whip."

What a blessed thing, in some cases, is a bad memory: Mr. Llewelyn had completely forgotten all the misery he had endured during the reign of the first Mrs. Llewelyn (for he had been twice married), who hen-pecked him so completely as not only, like Johnny Coppe's wife, to stint him in his cups, but also to prevent his old associates and familiar friends from visiting him at home, or enticing him abroad. And a very resigned and patient man was he, setting an excellent example to his neighbours; when

in the fifteenth year of her reign, and at the height of her tyranny, she was carried off by a sudden illness.

"Gladstone," said Howel, "you have one more introduction to go through, and then you will have seen all the family." As he spoke, he opened a small low door, which communicated with an inner hall, from which branched off several dark-looking passages. A wide oaken staircase, with curiously-carved balustrades, faced them. The steps were rubbed most fearfully bright; and though Howel led the way heedlessly up them, Gladstone did not follow him with great alacrity; finding it expedient to stop more than once and express his admiration of the carving of the balustrades, before he reached the top of the stairs. When safely landed there, he found himself in a long, low, wainscoted-gallery, dimly-lighted by an oriel window at the furthest extremity.

"Now, Gladstone, practise your best bow," whispered Howel, "for you will soon be in

the presence of one, who, in her own estimation, is worthy of being an emperor's bride."

Before Herbert had time to ask a question, he found himself in a large apartment, but which struck him as being too narrow for its length. The ceiling was curious, and evidently of great antiquity. It was formed by ribs of ornamented oak, interwoven into small square compartments; on each of which was beautifully carved the arms or crest of the family, mixed with birds, beasts, and grotesque heads and figures. The wainscoted-walls were hung with many a family portrait; but the shadows of evening were falling fast, and rendered every feature indistinct; and Herbert could not clearly ascertain, during the hurried glance he bestowed upon them, whether they represented beauties of a by-gone age, or grim-visaged warriors. The room, even when the meridian sun shone full upon it, wore a gloomy appearance; and now that its setting beams alone fell through the small-paned and thickly-

mullioned windows, which looked to the west, they served but to throw "a browner horror" over the oaken floor, ceiling, and wainscot. The room appeared to be unoccupied; and Herbert imagined that it must be a picture, and not to a human being, that he was about to be introduced. He therefore coolly stopped before the ample hearth, and tried to excite a blaze among its slumbering turf-ashes, to enable him to survey, rather more accurately than he had as yet been enabled to do, the apartment and its silent guests. A sod, yet untouched by the fire, fell on the hot embers, and a flame, bright and clear, arose in an instant, and illuminated—not with "the glad-some beams of day," but with the peculiar glare shed by torches—an oriel window. The unfortunate student, who read a page in Cornelius Agrippa's bloody book, and by so doing raised the devil, could have been little less startled at the apparition than was Herbert at the one he for an instant imagined he had called up by the simple aid of a poker;

for far back in the window he saw a female figure seated at a spinning-wheel. Her height appeared to exceed that of the common race of women, and was rendered still greater by a very high, stiff head-dress. The peculiar glare from the fire fell upon a face naturally pale as marble, and gave to it an expression so unearthly, that Herbert began to imagine that he was the dupe of some trick; when the figure slowly arose from her seat, and pushing her spinning-wheel aside, looked at him as if expecting him to approach her. Howel—who had with difficulty suppressed a smile at beholding the expression of surprise, not unmixed with terror, in Herbert's countenance—now came to his assistance; and leading him forward, introduced him to the stately dame, who proved to be Eleanor Llewelyn, the only child of the first Mrs. Llewelyn. Eleanor did not offer her hand, or bid him welcome; but she courtesied so low, that, like "Troy's proud dames, her garments swept the ground." Though it was nearly "darkness visible" in

the spacious apartment, the deep bay window in which Eleanor stood was still lighted up with the gorgeous rays of a brilliant sea sunset; and Herbert thought, as he gazed on her stately form, and all-but-sculptured beauty of feature, that he had seldom seen a more lovely subject for a painter's pencil. But when he next ventured to gaze steadily at the evidently proud beauty, the smile called forth by his courtier-like bow and highly polished address had passed away, and an expression of cold-hearted pride had usurped its place. Howel, after heaping sods upon the fire till their cheerful blaze penetrated to the furthest corner of the room, saying that he had some business to transact before supper, left Herbert and his sister to a *tête à tête*: the latter remarking that the evening was cold, led the way to the blazing fire. The chimney-piece resembled in shape that in the hall; but Herbert, with the quick eye of a herald, instantly detected a difference in the coats of arms that were sculptured on it. He men-

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tioned the circumstance to Miss Llewelyn, who replied in a tone of pleasure, "I see you have a knowledge of heraldry, Mr. Gladstone. And a very proper study *I* deem it for the son of an ancient and noble house. You are quite right: the arms over the fire-place in the hall *do* differ from these. Gules, a lion rampant, or, with a bordure indented, are the arms of my lamented mother; who was a lineal descendant of Rhys Ap Tewdwr Mawr, the head of one of the five royal tribes of Cambria; and this chimney-piece was erected after her marriage with my father, to commemorate an alliance which added not only honour, but wealth, to the house of Llewelyn. My father also traces his dissent, on the female side, from Gryffith Ap Cynan, King of North Wales."

Herbert bowed low to the fair daughter of so illustrious a house; and she, charmed with his courtier-like address, and the earnest, respectful attention with which he listened to her remarks, exerted herself to please, in a manner quite at variance with her usual

stately and reserved demeanour. A summons to supper interrupted a conversation that was agreeable and interesting to both parties. Herbert offered his hand to conduct his companion across the slippery floor; but he did not reach the door without many a misgiving, lest his feet should slip from under him, and lay him prostrate on his back—which he opined would be far from an enviable situation for a gentleman in waiting on a lady who appeared to exact the homage of a “Queen Elizabeth.” But the floor of the drawing-room, and the still more to be dreaded staircase, were walked over, not only with all proper decorum, but much dignity and grace. And seldom had a smile of such unalloyed pleasure been observed on the proud lips of Eleanor, as when he led her up the hall and placed her, with a graceful bow, next to Mrs. Llewelyn, at the hospitably-spread high-table; at the bottom of which the harper and several venerable servants of both sexes were allowed the honour of a seat. The long side-table was

crowded with domestics of a lower rank, and innumerable farm-servants; who one and all appeared to be doing most ample justice to the not very-tempting fare that was placed before them. For, though the high table was spread with fish, flesh, fowl, and pastry, the side-table could boast of nothing better than coarse barley-bread, oat-cakes, salted fish, and large wooden bowls filled with flummery. Several bowls of flummery were also to be seen on the high table; and Wenefrede, claiming one as her portion, commenced eating it with such evident satisfaction, that Herbert, imagining that it was quite a *bonne bouche*, requested a bowl might be handed to him. But after tasting one spoonful his courage and politeness "could no further go;" and, laying down his spoon, he cast a reproachful glance at Wenefrede, and asked of what flummery was made.

"Of oatmeal, hot water, and very sour buttermilk," replied Wenefrede—"and I am quite sure," she added, with a merry laugh,

but blushing deeply at the same time, "if we may judge from the expression of your countenance, that you thought it very good. But you must not confine yourself to one of our national dishes: pray try another." And looking round the table, she espied some pickled puffins, which she begged him to taste. But from this second infliction he was saved by the good-humoured Mrs. Llewelyn, who recommended him some beautiful pink trout from Llyn Ogwen, which she assured him had been swimming in the lake not three hours since. Herbert declared that they were as good as the flummery was bad, and that he could not pay them a higher compliment. The conversation during supper turned principally on field sports, and the voices of the ladies were seldom heard—which may account for their retiring early. Metheglin and *cwrw da* had circulated freely round during supper; but after the servants had disappeared from the side-table, and the ladies had bid to all "a fair good-night," the Hirlas (or drinking

horn) of the family was produced. Its antiquity could not be questioned ; and the beauty of the silver oak-leaves and mistletoe-berries with which it was ornamented, called forth praises long and loud from Gladstone. Mr. Llewelyn filled the horn to the brim with ale, and then drank off the draught without drawing his breath ; after giving "Gladstone, and a hearty welcome to him," as his toast. The same exploit was performed with the same apparent ease by all the gentlemen present. The horn was then presented to Herbert, and he rose many degrees in the good opinion of Mr. Llewelyn by requesting that it might be filled not with claret, but with ale.

"Well, indeed ! Master Gladstone, you show your sense," he exclaimed. "Why I look upon claret as nothing more nor less than very indifferent vinegar ; not sour enough to use for pickling, but sour enough, in all conscience, to give a man a good twinge here," pointing at the same time to a very rotund

part of his figure. Herbert tossed off the enormous draught with very little apparent effort, and then blew a blast on the empty horn that was echoed back by the arched roof.

"Well done," cried Mr. Llewelyn, in a tone of enthusiasm; "I would have sworn, had I not known it before, Master Gladstone, that you had Welsh blood in your veins: for let me tell you, it is not every man that can drain that horn without drawing his breath."

"It was not my first attempt, sir," replied Herbert, smiling; "therefore I am not fairly entitled to all the praises you are heaping upon me. I have had some experience in draining the Hirlas at Jesus College."

The harper, at this instant, commenced playing a bold and spirited air on his harp, which Howel accompanied with his voice. The words he sang, as he afterwards informed Herbert, were in praise of the Hirlas, and composed by a prince of Powis. Mr. Williams, who had said nothing, but who

had drank a good deal, had fallen asleep; and as Mr. Roberts seemed much inclined to follow his example, Herbert proposed retiring for the night; fearing, if he did not speedily beat a retreat, that he might prove "dull sleep's" next victim: for the soft and apparently mild ale (though in reality it was fearfully strong) was beginning to act as a soporific. Mr. Llewelyn, who could have taken twice the quantity he had yet swallowed without its producing any visible effect, strongly opposed this motion; but Howel came to his friend's assistance, and conducted him safely to the state chamber, and, when once there, he was not long in finding his way into the state bed; nor did he bestow much time in examining its beautifully - turned pillars, and curiously-carved head-piece, but sinking into a bed of down, he speedily fell asleep with the words of Imogen on his lips: — "These are kind creatures. Gods! what lies I've heard! Our courtiers say, all's savage but at court."

CHAPTER IV.

"Whene'er such wanderers I meete,
As from their night sportes they trudge home,
With counterfeiting voice I greets,
And call them on with me to roame."

AFTER many hours of very heavy sleep, Herbert suddenly awoke, and as suddenly sprang from his bed ; for the bright beams of the morning sun were streaming through an eastern window, and he feared that he should be late in joining the breakfast table of his primitive hostess. He felt more anxious than he would willingly have acknowledged, to stand well, not only in the good graces of Mrs. Llewelyn, but in those of the stately Eleanor

and the pretty lively Wenefrede ; and, when he approached the window, he had the satisfaction of discovering it was yet early in the day : the sun having but just appeared above the mountains. A throbbing headach reminded him of the Hirlas ; and he made a vow never to drain it again, be his residence at Glyn Llewelyn long or short. He dressed much more expeditiously than was his wont, and threw open the casement as wide as he possibly could, hoping the cool morning air might soothe his throbbing brow. It was, indeed, a morning of such calm loveliness, as to be well calculated to banish for a time all recollection of self, and to fill the heart with peace and good-will towards all created beings. The dew-drops lay thick upon the grass, glittering in the bright sunbeams like diamonds on an emerald carpet ; the light breeze passed by, bearing with it the perfume of the mountain thyme and fragrant bog-myrtle ; black-bird, skylark, and thrush, were warbling forth their morning song of praise ; and the distant

sound of a waterfall added its soothing accompaniment. Large flocks of goats and sheep were to be seen winding their way up the Glyn towards the mountains, followed by bare-legged boys, whose coarse dresses looked picturesque in the distance. Early as Herbert imagined the hour to be, many a shrill voice was soon to be heard in the house; and the yelping of dogs and the neighing of horses, joined with the grunting of pigs and crowing of cocks, formed a strange contrast to the "feathered songsters'" morning concert. Herbert, on entering the hall, found a substantial breakfast spread upon the high table, and Mr. Llewelyn pacing backwards and forwards before it with long and impatient strides, uttering every now and then a complaint against his lazy wife and daughters, who had not yet come down stairs, and who kept him waiting for his breakfast. Herbert hinted it was very early.

"Early do you call it, Master Herbert! why," he exclaimed, holding up a watch as

big as a saucer, "it is a quarter past six by my watch; and I'd believe that before the sun."

"And is Howel equally fond of his bed?" asked Gladstone; but he found from Mr. Llewelyn's answer that Howel, like royalty, could do no wrong: that Howel was not only up the first in the house, and never kept him waiting for his breakfast, but, in short, that he was the best son, the best brother, and the best man in North Wales.

"Or in England," added Herbert, anxious to say something particularly flattering; but he had the mortification to find that Mr. Llewelyn considered this remark as derogatory to his son's fame. Not that Mr. Llewelyn doubted that there were "good men and true" to be found in England; but that an Englishman could possibly be as good a man as a Welshman, was an absurdity that had never crossed his brain; and it was no small proof of the favourable impression Herbert had

made on him during their short acquaintance, that, laying his hand on Herbert's arm, he exclaimed with a sigh,—

“Well, now indeed, Master Gladstone, from the bottom of my heart, I wish that your father had been a Welshman.”

What Herbert could have replied to this wish can never be divulged, for at this instant the ladies of the family made their appearance; and he was too anxious to offer his morning greetings to the pleasing, good-humoured Mrs. Llewelyn, the proud and handsome Eleanor, and the pretty smiling Wenefrede, to bestow any further notice on Mr. Llewelyn. Howel soon walked in, followed not only by his favourite dog, Tywysog (Anglicised, Chieftain)—a dog with a long pedigree—but by terriers and spaniels who could boast of their beauty, but not “of a noble race.” The look of affectionate admiration with which Mrs. Llewelyn's eyes rested on her son's fine figure and handsome countenance, glowing with health and exercise, showed that she, as well

as his father, believed him to be created "of every creature's best."

"Come, come," said Mr. Llewelyn, laughing, and interrupting Herbert in the middle of a well-turned speech that he was addressing to Eleanor, "honied words are all very well in their way; but at breakfast time I'd rather have the honey, and make the words a present to the wind."

This hint produced the desired effect; for in an instant all the party had seated themselves at the high table. Tea, at this period, was a luxury in Wales that was exclusively confined to the higher classes; and, generally speaking, even amongst them, to the females. Mr. Llewelyn regarded it as a most dangerous liquid; and had he been acquainted with the passage, would no doubt have declared that a man who would drink a cup of tea was "fit for treason, stratagems, and spoils;" and in a most emphatic tone would have added, "let no such man be trusted." Mr. Llewelyn's most intimate friends were in the habit of

asserting, that he was never seriously displeased with his son but once in his life; and that his anger on that memorable occasion was called forth by finding him at Plas Conway with a cup of tea in his hand. Howel, discovering that he must relinquish tea-drinking, or endanger his father's peace of mind, like a dutiful son adopted the former course; and his morning's repast, in imitation of "good Queen Bess," was a beef-steak and ale. Mr. Llewelyn was too busily occupied with his own breakfast to notice what his neighbours were doing; and Herbert drank off his tea in peace, out of a clear blue-and-white china cup of so diminutive a size as to have condemned it, in the present tea-drinking age, to figure in "a curiosity shop," or a baby-house.

But this harmonious state of affairs was not destined to be of long continuance; for Gladstone, who being a frequent visitor at the theatre, was much in the habit of interlarding his conversation with quotations from Ben Jonson, Shakspeare, &c., had just com-

menced a speech with "as the immortal Shakspeare says," when Mr. Llewelyn gave a sudden start, and looking angrily at him, exclaimed, "Sir, if you value my good opinion, or care for my displeasure, never mention the name of that confounded deer-stealer in my presence again."

This speech served to recall to Herbert's memory a warning Howel had given him against mentioning the name of Shakspeare in his father's hearing.

"Sir," continued Mr. Llewelyn, his wrath waxing greater as he proceeded, "I would disinherit any child of mine that really took pleasure in reading the plays of that vile man. But you, Master Gladstone, who appear to know much more than is good for you of his lying plays, must know what a half-witted, bragging fellow he has represented my noble ancestor, Owen Glyndwr, to have been. Eleanor once read all he had said about him to me; and a towering passion we were both in, I can tell you. And such a scamp as

Eleanor tells me he was, too ! How dare he take away the character of a man whose very appearance would have frozen all the blood in his veins ? But what provokes me beyond all bearing is, to find that the foolish English people read what he says, and believe it, too ! Why,—why, Master Gladstone"—But Mr. Llewelyn had talked himself breathless. Stopping an instant to rest, he fixed his eyes full upon Herbert's face, and seeing that he looked very contrite, and extremely uncomfortable, he held out his hand to him, and said, "Well, well, Master Gladstone, we'll drop the subject." Then laughing heartily, he added, "Whatever your bard may have said against one of our great men, we have had our revenge ; for at least a hundred of our bards have said worse things—aye, and they were all true, too—of most of your kings and heroes."

After breakfast, Herbert accompanied Mr. Llewelyn and Howel in a grand round of visits to the stables and dog-kennels. Herbert

was a great admirer, and an excellent judge, of beautiful dogs and handsome horses, and he seemed to listen with deep interest to the account of the "birth, parentage, and education," of every dog or horse pointed out to him by Mr. Llewelyn. But "it was seeming all:" his thoughts were too much engrossed by Eleanor and Wenefrede to allow of his bestowing them on brute beasts. Fortunately for him, Mr. Llewelyn attributed his monosyllabic replies, not to inattention or stupidity, but to modesty; and argued well of a young man who did not presume to give an opinion till he had first ascertained what his might be on the subject. As soon⁺ as Herbert found himself alone with Howel, he began to speak of Eleanor, of whose early history he felt anxious to learn some particulars; but not knowing exactly how to word his inquiries, he commenced with a totally different speech to the one he had been turning over in his mind, and exclaimed, "By Jupiter, Howel, you have reason to be proud of your sister Eleanor."

"She is very handsome, and very clever," replied Howel; "but there is nothing to love about her; for she is as proud as an eastern queen, and as ill-tempered as Xantippe; and, moreover, hates me with all her heart."

"Hates you," repeated Herbert, in a tone of great astonishment; "why I did not think there was a being living that hated you."

"Well," said Howel, "if she does not hate me, she most decidedly does not love me. You look incredulous, Gladstone; but I will tell you a little of her early history, and then you will easily understand why she bears no love to me. Eleanor was fourteen years of age when her mother died, and up to that period she had been looked upon and treated as the heiress of this house; and I have often heard that her temper, naturally overbearing and haughty, had become, even at that early age, perfectly tyrannical. Her injudicious mother having, from her cradle, encouraged her in pride and all uncharitableness, and led her to consider riches and power as the only

things worth living for in this world ; you may easily imagine how coldly she wished my father joy, on the morning of his wedding with my mother, and how she felt and looked when my birth was announced to her. But she has a sort of unnatural command over her feelings ; and no one has ever heard her allude to either event. Nor can I accuse her of spoiling our domestic comfort, for she treats my father with cold respect. She tyrannizes sadly over poor Wenefrede, yet she is certainly very fond of her, and loads her with presents ; and although it has been often shrewdly surmised that she would gladly pick a quarrel with my kind, amiable mother, the opportunity has never been afforded her. As for her treatment of me, why, though she does occasionally "look unutterable things," she takes good care that no one but myself should see them ; and we are, I can assure you, spoken of as the most happy and united family in North Wales. But enough of Mistress Eleanor for one morning. And now, Gladstone, come this way and let me

hear what you really think of my brown horse ; for you know very well that your thoughts were in the clouds, or with Eleanor, who appears to have bewitched you when you expressed your admiration of that grey mare of my father's.

"I will follow you directly," said Herbert ; "but first tell me, my good fellow, how it happens that Miss Llewelyn, who is so remarkably handsome, is not married ?"

"Why, as she is, in consequence of inheriting her mother's fortune, remarkably rich, as well as handsome, it is, I must own, somewhat strange that she has not been persuaded to change her name ; but 'she hath forsworn to love' almost from her cradle. You see," said Howell, laughing, "I can quote Shakspeare, but have learned to time my quotations somewhat better than a certain friend of mine."

Gladstone cast one glance at Howel's "splendid bay horse," bestowed one expression of admiration on him, and then, turning his back on him and his master, almost unconsciously sauntered towards the door of the stable.

“As dogs do not delight you, nor horses either, this morning, I could recommend your returning to the house, and seeing if you cannot find ‘metal more attractive’ there,” said Howel, who was a little provoked by the slight notice Herbert had taken of his gallant steed. But “metal more attractive” was near at hand ; for in crossing the yard, in a small inner court they perceived Wenefrede surrounded by a clamorous group of ducks, chickens, pigeons, and two or three stately peacocks. A beautiful pigeon was seated on her left shoulder, and a peacock was eating bread from her hand, whilst the rest of the feathered tribe looked on, evidently not a little jealous of the attention bestowed on the favourite pets ; but she threw a few handfuls of corn amongst them, and all unpleasant feelings were instantly banished from the hungry group.

“Pray, Howel,” asked Gladstone, as he gazed with an admiring eye on Wenefrede’s happy and blooming face, “are all Welsh ladies pretty ? for as far as my experience goes,

I should decide that such was the case. Of the beauty of my cousin Eva I will say nothing, for on that subject we shall both cordially agree; and you must not storm and frown when I tell you that were you not head and ears in love with her, you would confess that your sister Wenefrede was the prettiest girl you ever saw, and that Miss Llewelyn was the handsomest woman, not only in North Wales, but in England."

"I have often thought," replied Howel, "that Eva and Wenefrede would look well in the same picture; the beauty of feature and intellectual expression of the former, would be an admirable contrast to the blooming complexion and innocent look of the latter. But what think you, my dear friend, would be your reception amongst the court beauties at Windsor, should the opinion you have just expressed be whispered in their ears by one of the mischievous sprites who are reported to make their home in yonder mountain?"

"I would not enter into their presence with-

out first having engaged a whole host of the Tylwyth Teg, or the fair family, as Eva tells me your peace-making fairies are called, to attend me," said Herbert, with a smile. "But, *à propos* of fairies," he continued, "Eva informed me that your sister Wenefrede, if she had not actually conversed with the fairies and elves that nightly dance in Glyn Llewelyn,

'Unheard, unseen,"

was as well informed of all their good and bad deeds, as if they each month sent her a journal of their proceedings. I must, therefore, go and talk to her on the subject."

"I believe," said Howel, colouring scarlet up to his very temples, "that Wenefrede is more learned on that subject than on any other. We mountaineers are proverbially superstitious; but remember, Gladstone, if you are only seeking the society of my sister to make her your butt hereafter, it would be better for us both that we had never met."

Herbert had been accustomed to look upon

Howel as one who was not "passion's slave" in any acceptation of the term, and he was equally unprepared for, and astonished at, this sudden burst of rage. But he laid his hand on the arm of Howel, and, in a tone of deep emotion, said, "Llewelyn, I arrived at your father's hall yesterday, a stranger, and I was received as a friend. That circumstance alone would have sealed my lips had I seen or heard anything that might have excited my mirth; but when all I saw and heard created pleasure and admiration in my heart, you may believe me when I assure you, that, not to save my right hand would I do aught to hurt your feelings, or those of any member of your family. It was an innate love of the marvellous, which has clung to me from childhood, that led me to wish for further information touching the supernatural inhabitants with which the Welsh peasantry have peopled every glen, nook, and mountain in the principality."

"I believe you, Gladstone," said Howel, grasping his hand; "I know you to be the

very soul of honour ; and I have to crave your pardon for the hasty and unguarded manner in which I spoke to you. But remember, my dear friend, when you are talking to Wenefrede, that she is a mere child, scarcely sixteen, and is just of an age to be deeply smitten by a laced boot, and cocked hat and feathers, should the owner of them bestow much of his conversation upon her. I therefore hope that you will listen to her tales of wonder in silence, and reserve your power of eloquence for the ears of Eleanor, on which it will fall 'as soothing as the sweet south upon a bed of violets,' though it will not touch her heart. But," he exclaimed somewhat abruptly, "do you see a half crazy looking fellow yonder? That is David Rhys, a harper of no small renown, for he declares that he holds the situation of chief musician to the queen of the fairies. He is a great ally of Wenefrede's, and from him, I suspect, she has acquired much of her 'fairy lore.' David Rhys cannot speak a word of English, which I regret, for he would have amused you greatly,

could he have conversed with you. Of course his highly poetical tales lose much of their beauty when translated; but come this way, and I will get Wenefrede to tell you his favourite tale. She has repeated it till, I suspect, she fancies that if she were not actually one of the dancers of the glyn, at least she was a spectator upon the occasion."

Herbert and Howel walked up to the spot where Wenefrede was standing, and, after a little persuasion on the part of Howel, and a good deal of blushing and hesitation on her own, she related to Herbert the following tale:—

"North Wales did not boast of a more perfect musician than David Rhys. Vain was it for any other harper to enter into competition with him, at Eisteddford, or in bower or hall; he won all the prizes, and enchanted every ear. Other bards struck their harps, but no applause followed; and in a fit of rage and jealousy they snapped the wires, and threw their harps aside—at least so says David Rhys. Lords, —nay, even princes—offered David riches and

honours if he would strike his harp within their halls ; but he loved his dear native country too well to be tempted to leave it for either honour or gold. Higher honour than any lord, or even prince, could bestow was in store for him, however ; for one lovely evening in summer, as he was walking in this glyn, and meditating on the beauties of nature, or every now and then striking a wild strain on his harp, he was somewhat startled by the sudden appearance of what he at that instant imagined to be a most beautiful little child. The smiling, bright-eyed boy came dancing up to David, and requested the harper to follow him to his father's hall, where, he said, a large party was assembled in the hope of hearing David's ravishing strains. David Rhys was little in the habit of following anything but his own pleasure ; but he now felt as if he was spell-bound, and that, whether he liked it or not, he must follow this lovely infant, wheresoever he might lead him. So, without asking a single question, he followed the child up the glyn. He

was obliged to run, to keep pace with his juvenile and nimble guide; but, on turning into a path that led to the mountain, a mist suddenly enveloped them, and at the same instant David was assailed by 'a hundred wry-mouthed elves,' who asked him whether he would travel above wind, below wind, or under wind. A soft voice whispered in his ear, 'Soar not too high; but beware how a mortal of your genius abases himself too low.' David instantly exclaimed, 'I will travel under wind.' Scarcely had he uttered the words, than he felt himself raised gently from the ground, and was borne softly and pleasantly through the regions of mist. After travelling in this luxurious style for some time, he suddenly felt that he was descending towards the earth; and just as his feet rested on it the mist disappeared, and he found that he was standing at the bottom of a magnificent flight of marble steps, that led to the entrance door of a most unearthly-looking mansion. His little guide was once more at his side, and conducted him up the steps;

but when he threw open the door, a scene of such dazzling splendour burst upon his sight, that David was obliged to set down his harp, and veil his eyes with his hands. A chair of ivory and gold was brought for him, and, after a little practice, he found he could bear the dazzling light, and began to look around him. He saw that he was surrounded by beings not of this world ; for the height of the tallest of the numerous group did not exceed that of a child two years of age. Both sexes were exquisitely formed ; their complexions were alike fair and transparent ; and their heads were covered with long and flowing ringlets. The females were attired in pale green gossamer robes, with girdles of flowers, and with dew-drops that glittered like diamonds, in their hair. The bard began to play, and his tiny audience to dance, and so enchanting a sight, he declares, was never before vouchsafed to mortal eyes. A most delightful beverage was frequently handed to him, in a small gold cup ; it resembled nothing that he had ever tasted before,

and seemed to inspire him with quite a magical touch on his harp. Midnight had long past, and still the unwearied group danced on. At length trays of gold, covered with cups not bigger than those of the acorn, and filled with milk, were handed round, and the harper received permission to retire to his bed. His beautiful little guide came forward, and showed him the way to the luxurious chamber that had been prepared for him. David instantly threw himself on a couch formed of gold and ivory, and fell into a deep slumber. Picture to yourself his surprise and horror, on awaking early in the morning shivering with cold, and aching in every limb, to find that he was lying on the cold ground instead of a bed of down; and that not one stone was left of the splendid mansion in which, a few hours before, he had displayed his wondrous talents on the harp. But a moment's reflection banished all unpleasant feelings, and pride and exultation filled his heart; for he now felt convinced that his strains had been considered worthy the at-

tention of immortal ears, and that he had spent the night in the presence of the king and the queen of the fairies and all their attendants. He could no longer doubt. A proud man from henceforward was David Rhys; and many a good horn of ale has he won by relating this adventure, in hall and kitchen, on a winter's night. But it is fortunate for me that he does not understand English, or he would never forgive me for uttering so unpoetical a version of his tale. I have often told it before, but always with more satisfaction to myself."

"But," said Herbert, "of course David Rhys does not believe that he was really honoured with an invitation to fairyland, though his vanity may tempt him to impose such a tale on the credulous."

"Howel does not belong to that party," said Wenefrede, "for he maintains that the only part of the story which is not purely imaginary, is the number of cups of a delicious beverage that David quaffed; and that the fairy palace was, in fact, an old farm-house

up amongst the mountains, to which he had been summoned to play at a wedding-feast. But, I believe, even Howel would not have courage to tell David his opinion on the subject; and I find his tales, whether true or false, so very amusing, that I always try to look as if I believed every word he uttered, lest he should be affronted and not pay us another visit. He has never been to Plas Conway since the day that Eva Wynn laughed at a long history he told her, of his never being able to compose a line of poetry till he had passed a night within a fairy circle at the top of Cader Idris, in Merionethshire; and that the following morning, when he awoke, he spoke in rhyme. But," said Wenefrede, lowering her voice, and looking very grave, "it was a very dangerous experiment he tried; for had he not awoke an inspired poet, after having slept in the magical circle that is supposed to be the grave of Idris, he would have been either an idiot or a madman for the remainder of his life."

Herbert struggled long to suppress a laugh,

but his habitual politeness at length gave way ; and as Howel joined heartily in his mirth, poor Wenefrede was quite overpowered by shame and confusion ; but she soon recovered her spirits, and smiling most good-humouredly said, " I suspect, Mr. Gladstone, you are inclined to imagine that I have taken a nap in the magic circle, and have lost my senses."

" On the honour of a Gladstone, and a gentleman, I was laughing not at you, Miss Wenefrede, but at your friend David. Why, he must be a most extraordinarily impudent fellow to quarrel with Eva for turning so absurd a story into ridicule."

" I believe that David is convinced that he was inspired with his poetical genius by passing a night on the cold grave of Idris," observed Howell ; " and, strange and incredible as it may appear to you, I could point out more than one individual in this neighbourhood who is labouring under a similar delusion. But, after all that may be said against it, we have classical authority for our superstition ; and, I

suppose, my ancestors on learning that Greece possessed *one* spot of inspiration, determined not to be out-poetryed, and therefore declared that Wales could boast of *two*: and you may still see on the top of Snowdon, a large block of granite, called the Black Stone of Arddu, which has often served as a couch for the bold aspirants for poetic inspiration."

"Commend me to a down bed at Glynn Llewelyn Hall in preference," said Gladstone, laughing.

Wenefrede at this instant was called loudly for by Mr. Llewelyn, who suddenly appeared from one of the innumerable outbuildings. "Wenefrede, Wenefrede ! here are a dozen old women, at least, waiting to consult your mother about their coughs, colds, rheumatic pains, and I know not what besides. Will you call her to them, or shall I send them to her?"

"I will take them into the house, sir, for the wind is rather cold ; and as they will one and all have a long story to tell, my mother might by to-morrow have to cure herself of a cough

or cold, if she listened to them in the open air."

Wenefrede beckoned to the group of old women, who followed her across the yard.

"The spell, I see, is broken," said Howel with a smile on his lips, as he observed Gladstone's eyes resting on the retreating party of women. "You no longer imagine all the females of our land to be perfect beauties!"

"Good heavens! the spell is indeed broken! why I am almost tempted to imagine that yonder group are a set of witches, attracted hither by the magical powers of David Rhys' harp."

"And yet," said Howel, "those old women are by no means the most frightful specimens of their race that I could show you. But is it not extraordinary, that such very pretty girls as you constantly see amongst our peasantry, should frequently, even before they reach old age, be metamorphosed into perfect hags? As it only occurs amongst the poorer classes, I suppose, we must blame hard labour

and constant exposure to the sun, for working a change so little to be desired."

"Mrs. Llewelyn is, I perceive, quite the Lady Bountiful of the neighbourhood," observed Gladstone; "but if she is in the habit of dispensing drugs and advice gratis, I suspect she is no great favourite with the apothecary, either at Bangor or Conway."

"Neither town can boast of possessing an *Æsculapius*," replied Howel. "Several luckless wights have attempted to pick up a scanty living in both places, but they have soon taken their departure, cursing the pure air, and hardy constitutions of the Carnarvonshire people. But," added Howel, "I have some business to transact for my father in Bangor, and it is high time for me to be off. What say you, Gladstone, will you walk with me? The road is tolerably level, you will have no Penmæn-maur to encounter."

"I will accompany you gladly," said Herbert, "and I hope that you will let me have a peep at the cathedral."

Howel smiled, and said, "I am afraid that you will find but little to admire in our cathedral. It was destroyed by the Saxons, and afterwards rebuilt; but my ancestor, Owen Glyndwr, again reduced it to a heap of ruins; and the worthy bishop who restored it to its present state appears to have possessed more piety than taste."

"Well, Howel, there is no occasion for you, in speaking of an old cathedral, to look as grave as you could possibly do if you were confessing that your lady-love was no beauty; for I can assure you that I do not expect to see a second Westminster Abbey. And really, in a country where you can neither look to the right nor the left without beholding something to admire, apologies for an ugly cathedral are quite superfluous."

If Herbert admired the cathedral as little as Howel had anticipated he would do, his praises of the (then) most rural and picturesque city were long and loud. It was somewhat difficult to persuade him to leave it and retrace his

steps to the glyn ; but they reached it at last, in excellent spirits and desperately hungry, only just too late to assist Mrs. Wynn and Eva (who had been invited to spend a few days at the glyn) from their horses. Eva required no assistance ; but Mrs. Wynn, who was seated on a pillion behind old Evan (who carried on each side of his high, peaked saddle, a saddle-bag containing the paraphernalia of the ladies), had not disdained to accept the aid proffered her by Mr. Llewelyn, whose loud but cheerful voice was heard long before his person was visible. When the party entered the hall, the old harper, Roderic, arose from his seat, and advanced to meet them with a respectful but, at the same time, affectionate manner. He bowed low on taking the hand held out to him by Mrs. Wynn, but on receiving Eva's, he pressed it with fervour, and raising his eyes to heaven, called down blessings on her head. Eva lingered by his side till her mother summoned her to follow to the brown parlour, the common sitting room o

the family; where they were received by Mrs. Llewelyn and Wenefrede with kisses and shakes of the hand innumerable, and by Eleanor with freezing politeness. But when Herbert approached, a change came over the countenance of Eleanor; her dark, full, grey eyes lost their cold, withering look; a smile played on her proudly arched lips, and pushing aside her embroidery frame, she motioned to him to take a seat by her side. Mrs. Wynn looked on with some interest and much surprise. Eleanor had been sought in vain by numbers: she had passed on,

“In maiden meditation, fancy free,”

from youth to womanhood; and was it probable—was it even possible—that she should, in the short space of four and twenty hours, have formed an attachment for a “beardless boy?”

“Is it not commanded that a man shall not marry his grandmother?” asked Eva, as she was assisting her mother to make the little alteration that was deemed necessary after her ride.

"I have been told so," replied Mrs. Wynn, with a smile that said almost as much as Lord Burleigh's shake of the head, "and I used to consider it as a most superfluous interdiction, but from what I have just seen I am tempted to change my opinion."

For many years after the death of her mother, Eleanor had sedulously sought the friendship of Mrs. Wynn, and much of her time had been spent at Castel Craig; and, after Mrs. Wynn had removed to Plas Conway, the intimacy had continued unabated, till the commencement of the last year, from which time her visits had been "few and far between," and her manners had become most disagreeably constrained and cold. Mrs. Wynn having vainly sought an explanation of conduct so strange, no longer sought her society, and received her formal civility with a gentle dignity.

"Dinner, dinner," exclaimed Wenefrede, throwing open the door. "Oh, Eva—dear, dear Eva—do not stop to put in that knot of

ribbons in your hair, or you will be too late to see Mr. Gladstone lead Eleanor down to the hall. Do you know the servants say it is quite a pretty sight, and they are all standing in the inner hall to see them pass. They remind me of a lady and gentleman I saw in a play the last time I was in Chester. But, Eva, often as you have talked to me about your cousin, you never told me how very handsome he was : I was quite astonished when I saw him ; and then he is ten times more agreeable and good-tempered than I expected to find him : no pride, no — but, my dear Eva, your dress is quite perfect, so pray, pray come."

Wenefrede, to her very visible delight, was destined to share in the triumph of her sister ; for at the drawing-room door they encountered Eleanor, and her " esquire of dames." " Mr. Gladstone is offering you his hand, Wenefrede," said Eleanor, with a smile ; " take it, my dear child, and he will show you how to enter a room with proper dignity."

Eva was too much occupied with talking and

listening to Mr. Llewelyn and Howel, to pay much attention to the "sayings and doings" of her neighbours ; but it did not escape the observation of Mrs. Wynn, that Eleanor, although she had laid aside her usual taciturnity, was by no means anxious to engross the whole of the conversation ; and that, with singular adroitness, she contrived to bring Wenefrede forward, and to set her off to the greatest possible advantage. Dinner ended, the ladies soon rose to leave the hall ; and, as Mrs. Llewelyn passed Herbert, she whispered in his ear, "Howel is no great lover of wine, and will be happy to leave the hall whenever you may feel inclined. Never mind Mr. Llewelyn's telling you that you are a poor milk-sop ; he says the same of all the young men that visit here, who cannot drink as deeply of ale as he can."

This was very agreeable advice to Herbert ; for though he nightly, when in London, joined his club, and took his glass as freely as any one there, yet he felt no inclination to sacrifice to Bacchus in broad daylight ; and when, not

only Howel, but Mr. Llewelyn, proposed that they should adjourn to the dog-kennel, Herbert seconded the motion most cordially.

"It will save us a long round if we go through the kitchen," said Mr. Llewelyn; and, accordingly, through the kitchen they went. It was a very large and lofty room, and from its arched and strongly ribbed wooden roof hung innumerable sides of dried beef, goats and sheep; which were interspersed with bacon, hams and tongues. A ponderous oak table occupied nearly the whole side of the western wall, whilst the lower end of the room was filled with massive iron-bound chests, which were filled with oatmeal. Seated on a high-backed settle by the side of an enormous turf fire, was a grey-headed, venerable looking old man, busily employed in knitting a stocking. Howel addressed him as Will Bugail (or Will the shepherd); and Mr. Llewelyn told Herbert that he had lived in the family fourscore years, and that he was much depressed in spirits in consequence of a

younger man having been appointed to take charge of the flocks of sheep—which the old man loved as fondly as if they had been his children—to their summer pasturage up in the mountains. A very deep drawn sigh, which evidently came from the heart of the grey-headed venerable-looking shepherd reached the ears of Mr. Llewelyn, who, approaching him, laid his hand on the aged man's shoulder, and addressed him in a cheerful, soothing manner. The fine old shepherd looked pleased, if not comforted, by the words addressed to him; and when a few cabalistic words had been spoken by Mrs. Llewelyn to a black-eyed damsel, who was busily engaged with her spinning-wheel, a smile was to be seen on the wrinkled but hale countenance of the shepherd. The pretty spinner disappeared, but quickly returned with a large black jug of ale. Mr. Llewelyn took it from her hand, drank a small draught, and then presented it to the old shepherd, who rose from his seat to receive he bowed low to Mr. Llewelyn,

Howel, and Herbert; and nodding familiarly to the black-eyed damsel, drank it off with evident satisfaction.

"Judging from the appearance of that ancient shepherd," said Herbert, "I should imagine that strong ale was very conducive to health."

"If you suppose that he is in the habit of drinking ale, you are greatly mistaken," replied Howel; "for during the last seventy years of his life, Will Bugail has spent four months every summer up in the mountains, miles and miles away from any house, or even hut; and his only beverage has been spring water or buttermilk. It is true that a few bottles of strong ale are always sent with the shepherds, and the dairymaids who bear them company, to be used for 'their stomach's sake,' should they require it; but they are almost invariably brought back unopened."

"Do the shepherds and dairymaids dwell in tents, like the patriarchal shepherds of yore?" asked Herbert; "or are they more primitive

still, making their lodging upon the cold ground."

"No: they inhabit what is called a summer residence; but I suspect that were you condemned to spend the summer months in one of them, you would pray for a year that was all winter: for this summer residence consists of one low, long room, built with unhewn stone, and as devoid of comfort as of furniture. Stones serve for seats, and dry grass does duty for beds; and as for their daily fare, nothing but mountain air could render it palatable. What think you of breakfasting, dining and supping on oat cake and cheese, and washing it down with buttermilk or whey? And yet, with such miserable fare and accommodation, there is not one of our shepherds or dairy-women who does not look forward with pleasure to removing up into the mountains."

"I do not wonder at that," replied Herbert; "for it must be a strange, wild life, full of freedom and novelty. I think I should enjoy

it myself for a short time. Do you never pay a visit to the summer residence?"

"Oh, yes," said Howel; "I always used to go and see Will Bugail once or twice during his absence from the glyn; but as I had not formed a romantic attachment for either of the dairymaids who accompanied him, I always found a day a sufficiently long time for solitary meditations on the mountain top."

"But," asked Herbert, "do you send your young men and maidens to their summer residence with only an old shepherd for their chaperon?"

"No, no," said Howel, laughing; "my mother has a sort of domestic female Cerberus, a daughter of Will Bugail's, who takes charge of the youthful damsels of the party; and woe betide one of them should they, instead of attending to their churning or cheese making, indulge in a little innocent flirtation with one of the young shepherds. There," said Howel, pointing to a black-eyed, waspish-looking little woman, "is our dairymaids' guardian

during their summer residence in the mountains."

"I should be very sorry to be one of her wards," replied Herbert; "for I am quite certain that she is a desperate vixen; and although I cannot understand one word that she is uttering, I am convinced that she is saying very bitter things to that group of pretty spinners yonder. What have they done to merit such a scolding?"

"Only left off their work to take a sly peep at you, Gladstone."

"Why, poor things, they have paid almost as dearly for their peep as did Tom of Coventry. But I see your father is waiting for us in the yard, so I suppose I must leave the damsels to 'the tender mercy' of their Argus-like guardian, and follow him."

More than an hour was passed in the well-arranged dog-kennels by the gentlemen; and if Mr. Llewelyn's account was to be believed, "Thesens's dogs, though bred out of the Spartan kind," were mere mongrels compared

with his. Mr. Llewelyn at length grew weary of pointing out beauties, and Gladstone of commending them. The former retired to his smoking room, and the latter accompanied Howel to the common sitting room, where they found the ladies seated at their work. Cards, and a little flirting between the younger branches, served to kill time till the early supper was announced.

CHAPTER V.

Then open'd wide the Baron's hall
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all ;
Power laid his rod of rule aside,
And ceremony doff'd his pride.
The heir, with roses in his shoes,
That night might village partner choose.

SCOTT.

WHEN Herbert entered the hall on the following morning, he found all the party assembled, and evidently only waiting for his appearing to begin breakfast. Mr. Llewelyn was not only seated, but was busily engaged swallowing large spoonfuls of flummery : he stretched out his hand to Herbert, and as soon as he had gulped down a large mouthful, said,

"I make no apologies, Master Gladstone, for beginning my breakfast before you arrived ; for this is a very busy day with us, and we shall soon want the hall for a more profitable employment than that of eating."

Mrs. Llewelyn informed Herbert that she was expecting a very large party of young and old women, who would each come provided with a spinning wheel ; that she should furnish them with flax, and that they would spin from seven o'clock in the morning till five o'clock in the evening, only resting from their labours for an hour to eat a dinner that would be provided for them at twelve o'clock. She added, "As the poorest woman amongst them would feel affronted at money being offered her in compensation for her work, it is called 'a love spinning-day.' You have no such meetings in England, I have heard, Master Gladstone ; but they are very common in North Wales."

Breakfast was quickly dispatched ; and in a very short time numbers of respectably-

dressed maidens, fat, comfortable-looking middle-aged matrons, and decrepit old women, might be seen flocking into the hall. The spinning-wheels of the old women were carried for them by their scantily-clothed, but healthy-looking, rosy-cheeked grandchildren. Though the dress of many bespoke poverty, all looked clean; and several farmers' wives dressed in their best attire, might be observed amongst the group, who had walked many a mile, or jogged a weary way on horseback that morning, to show their respect and goodwill for Madam Llewelyn. Soon were wheels innumerable in motion; nor were the ladies of the party suffered to look on in idleness: a spinning-wheel was presented to each of them, and they sat down amongst the younger members to keep good order, and to set an example of industry. Andromache could not have guided the spindle with a prouder air than did Eleanor Llewelyn, who had seated herself in "a baronial chair of state," by the side of a blazing turf fire, which the size of

the old hall rendered agreeable even in summer. Opposite to Eleanor stood a large chair that had evidently been reserved for some highly-favoured and expected guest. Suddenly the entrance door of the hall was thrown open, and two well-dressed, smiling little girls entered, each bearing a spinning-wheel. They were followed by Howel, who supported on his right arm an elderly woman whose dress and whole appearance declared that her station in life was highly respectable; whilst his left arm was grasped by the fat, red hands of a middle-aged, buxom-looking female, with a remarkably black eye and good-humoured countenance, who looked up in Howel's face with an expression of admiration and affection that was quite comic. Young and old women arose from their seats, dropped low courtesies, and cried, "God bless him!" as he passed. The arm-chair had been reserved for the elderly female; and when Howel had seated her in it with respectful attention, he looked around for a comfortable

nook in which to deposit his other companion. Wenefrede, who was very busily engaged, not with her spinning-wheel, but in listening to Herbert's account of the delights of London, had not observed the addition that had been made to the party; but on Eva's approaching her and whispering a few words in her ear, she started from her seat with an energy that astonished Herbert, and upset her spinning-wheel; but fortunately for his toes, Eva caught hold of it just as it was falling upon them. Herbert was totally unconscious of the danger they had escaped: he saw nothing but Wenefrede; and when he beheld her throwing her round white arms about the neck of the younger of Howel's companions, and kissing her rosy cheek, he felt that, at least for "the time being," he should not object to changing places with the fat, comely dame, whose name he discovered to be Molly Davies. Howel having found a comfortable seat, led Molly to it; and he and Wenefrede stood by her side, and asked and answered

questions innumerable. At length Wenefrede, having satisfied herself that Molly Davies's dairy, poultry-yard, and crops, were in a most flourishing state, returned to her spinning-wheel, and Herbert.

"And who is Molly Davies?" asked Herbert, before Wenefrede had had time to resume her seat.

"Howel's foster-mother and mine," replied Wenefrede. "And that old woman in the large arm-chair, whom my father is talking to, is the foster-mother of my mother. Eva tells me you have no foster-mothers, brothers, or sisters, in England. I should not like that. Why, my foster-mother loves me almost as well as she does my foster-brother; and he would risk his life in my defence, were it necessary."

All he heard and saw was so strange and new to Herbert that he was inclined to think "t was but a dream;" and that Wenefrede, the hall, and all its busy inmates, would suddenly vanish from his sight.

Mrs. Llewelyn, who had been talking to her foster-mother, on her way back to her seat, had to pass that of Wenefrede; and she stopped to examine into the progress that Wenefrede was making with her spinning; but sundry ominous shakes of the head and liftings-up of the hands, attended with exclamations of surprise, brought a burning blush into Wenefrede's dimpled cheeks. Mrs. Llewelyn then turned to Herbert, and said, in a good-humoured tone, "Come, Master Gladstone, I see I shall get no work done till I have sent you out of the hall: you are too handsome and amusing to remain here on such a busy day as this. Only just look at these cables that my naughty little Wenefrede has been making instead of fine threads, whilst she was listening to your wonderful tales about London. And then the young women do nothing but look at you and your gay dress, and forget how much I shall lose by their idleness."

"Do not lay all the blame upon me, my

dear madam," said Herbert, though he was at the same time quite ready and willing to bear it, "for there are more bright eyes at this instant turned upon Howel, than upon me."

"You are both doing me a great deal of mischief," said Mrs. Llewelyn, laughing; "and I think my wisest plan will be to send you both out of the hall."

"And are we to be banished for the whole of the day?" asked Herbert, in rather a disconsolate tone.

"Yes, but Howell will take you to Llyn Ogwen to fish, and we always end the love-spinning day with a dance, so I hope, after all, that you will not pass a very dull one."

Mrs. Llewelyn called her son to her, and taking him and Gladstone gently, but determinedly, by the arm, she led them to a side door, quietly pushed them through it, turned the key in the lock, and, with a merry laugh, resumed her spinning. If a look could strike a mortal blow, the one directed by Eleanor at Mrs. Llewelyn would have struck her dead on

the spot, but not possessing that power it was unnoticed; and Mrs. Llewelyn, quite unconscious of having roused Eleanor's indignation, went on laughing and chatting with the young women that surrounded her. Mr. Llewelyn, after having, by word or nod, noticed all the party, now took his departure; and only the old harper remained amongst the host of females, and, with his lively airs, cheered them at their work. A farmer's wife from the neighbourhood of Conway, had brought a friend with her, who, she said, came from a distance; that her name was Betty Thomas, and that she was a stranger to every one present. Betty was a tall bony woman, with a broad masculine face, which she took much pains to conceal under a full bordered mob cap, tightly pinned over her chin; but of that feature enough was still visible to prove most unequivocally that it was upon very familiar terms with a razor. She had a loud voice, and tried to conceal its defects by speaking in a low mincing tone. Betty seated herself in the

midst of the youngest group in the hall ; and it soon became evident that she was as ignorant of the art of spinning as Eve could have been in Paradise ; but she told droll stories, uttered simple remarks with anything but a simple look, dealt largely in quaint sayings, and kept all around her on the broad grin ; and when at length Mrs. Wynn thought it necessary to remonstrate with her for spoiling so much beautiful flax, she answered with so much ready wit that Mrs. Wynn could not suppress a smile ; and Mrs. Llewelyn, who had joined the group, laughed most merrily. Mrs. Llewelyn, on her way back to her seat, stopped to admire Eva's work.

"Why, my dear child," she exclaimed, "you are working as hard as you could do if your daily bread depended upon it."

"Little praise is due to Miss Wynn," said Eleanor, "for working so industriously ; for she feels that every turn of her wheel will add to a stock of beautiful linen, that she hopes will one day be her own."

"Such a thought, I am sure, never came into my head, Eleanor ; and, I will venture to say, such a thought never came into Eva's either. Did it, my love ?" asked Mrs. Llewelyn, kissing her at the same time with the affection of a mother. Eva coloured up to her temples, and said,—

"I would have spun for you, my dear Mrs. Llewelyn, with the same industry that I have done to-day, had you never had a son ; for I loved you long before"—she sank her voice to a whisper, and with a still deeper blush added—"I loved your son."

"I know you did, my dear girl," replied Mrs. Llewelyn ; "but do not let Eleanor's spiteful remarks vex you. She is an envious jade, and cannot bear to think of your being mistress of this hall."—"Or of the napkins and table-cloths," said Eva, with a smile.

The wheels continued their monotonous hum till the clock in the inner hall struck five. Mrs. Llewelyn then held up her hand as a signal that they should stop, and they instant-

ly did so, as if by magic. The announcement that tea was ready for all who chose to partake of it was received with clamorous delight ; so great a luxury was this now common beverage considered a century and a half ago in Wales. Betty Thomas walked towards Wenefrede with a mincing gait that contrasted ludicrously with her masculine figure, and laying a large bony hand on the slight arm of Wenefrede, Betty exclaimed, in a most piteous accent,

“Man alive ! my dear young lady, I am dying with thirst ; but, if you have any charity in your heart, let me have a good jug of ale, and not a cup of that horrid, black-looking stuff that you call tea, which I cannot, for the life of me, help thinking is some horrid herb sent by the evil one to ruin our bodies, if not our souls.”

Wenefrede promised Betty Thomas a very large jug of ale, and then ran off, with a light heart and a lapwing's speed, after Eva, to dress for the ball. Hugheses, Robertses, Williamses, Joneses,

and Evanses, to say nothing of Wynnes and Lloyds, might now be seen approaching the hall, mounted on horses and ponies, or, more independently still, trudging on foot. When Herbert entered the drawing-room, after a toilet that had evidently not been made in haste, he found it nearly filled with newly-arrived guests; in the midst of whom he observed Mrs. Llewelyn, who was busily engaged in exchanging shakes of the hands, and smiles, with all around her. She looked quite young and pretty, and her dress, if not of the most fashionable make, even Herbert acknowledged was handsome. It consisted of a richly-brocaded silk gown, which fell back and exhibited a quilted white satin petticoat; and a very handsome Flanders lace cap, though it was a most brobdignag height, did not look either strange or unbecoming in his eyes; for he had seen many a London belle in a similar cap. In her hand Mrs. Llewelyn held one of those enormous feather fans that are still to be seen in houses where the finery of

great-grandmothers has been preserved. At a short distance from Mrs. Llewelyn, stood Eleanor, "with head erect;" and though it was very evident she wished it to be understood that "she looked down disdainfully on the surrounding crowd," yet her dress of ruby velvet, trimmed with fringe of massive gold, and the diamonds that sparkled not only around her neck, arms, and waist, but glittered amidst the dark and glossy tresses of her hair, proved that she did not deem it unworthy of her best apparel. In truth, "she looked a goddess, and she moved a queen;" and Herbert could not help acknowledging to himself, that nature had intended her to receive homage "from belted knights," and that she was quite out of her vocation when employed in keeping in order a group of refractory maidens at their spinning-wheels. Herbert looked around the room, but in vain, for Wenefrede and Eva: they had not yet made their appearance; but in searching for them, his eye rested upon Mr. Llewelyn, who was by no means the least con-

spicuous, or least happy person present. He wore a splendid red coat, with a large falling collar of the finest cambric, whilst his waistcoat, of cloth of silver with solid silver buttons, proved, that although silver was "nothing accounted in the days of Solomon," it ranked highly in the reign of Queen Anne, as an ornament of dress. His thick nut-brown hair was hid under a full-bottomed wig, and his well-shaped legs were set off to great advantage by stockings as white as the snow in the mountains, and which had been knit by Mrs. Llewelyn, and made of wool sheared from the backs of his own flock. Mr. Llewelyn appeared to be master of an inexhaustible stock of good jokes, or perhaps he did not discover the dullness of a twice-told tale when he was the narrator of it, and made one serve for many groups; be that as it may, whatever part of the room he was in, there you might see "laughter holding both his sides." Herbert's eyes were earnestly fixed on the door when it was suddenly thrown open, and not only We-

nefrede and Eva walked into the room, but a large party of young merry maidens, at whose simple toilets Wenefrede and Eva had been assisting. Eleanor instantly advanced a few steps forward, her dark eyes resting on Herbert's face with a look of earnest anxiety that was not lost upon Eva ; but Eleanor almost instantly withdrew them, and, turning to Mrs. Wynn, addressed some common-place remark to her. Yet momentary as had been that glance, it convinced Eleanor that Wenefrede's appearance had excited not only admiration, but surprise, in the heart of Herbert. In fact, so great was his astonishment, that he seized Eva by the hand, and asked if the fashionably-attired, elegant girl now speaking to Howel, and the simply-dressed Wenefrede, that he had seen at her spinning-wheel a few hours before, were one and the same person. Eva, who forgot, in her anxiety, to say "a word in season" in praise of her friend's beauty of mind, as well as of person—an injunction she had received from Howel, not to "boast her

off" to Herbert—went on to prove that he would find that she would "outstrip all praise, and make it halt behind her." As many an admiring glance was bestowed on the dresses of Wenefrede and Eva by less friendly eyes than those of Herbert, we hope that we may be pardoned for giving a full and particular account of them. We must first premise that they differed from each other in no one respect, and were the work of Mrs. Selby, the most fashionable mantua-maker of the day. Eva's dress had been presented to her by Lady Gladstone, and Eleanor had delighted Wenefrede by ordering one exactly similar for her.

The dresses were made of pale blue satin, with tight bodices, that were laced in front with black straps of satin and fastened with buttons of rubies ; the robes fell back and gave to view snow-white damask petticoats, embroidered round the skirts with bunches of flowers ; tuckers and ruffles of rich point lace completed the dresses ; chains of gold, with broad flat crosses of the same material, were suspended around

the fair throats of their wearers, and small bunches of artificial flowers were mixed amongst the long ringlets that fell down their backs as low as their waists. It only remains for us to record that their shoes were of Spanish leather, laced with gold; and we shall flatter ourselves that if our readers should fail in dressing a beau of the present century from top to toe, they would find no difficulty in attiring a belle of a century gone by. Wenefrede's possession of so much finery had been kept a profound secret from Mr. and Mrs. Llewelyn, and their surprise and admiration when they first beheld it (they strove hard to conceal the latter feeling, but in spite of all their efforts it still peeped forth) was very great.

"Why, Wenefrede," exclaimed Mrs. Llewelyn, who told the pleasure she felt by a merry laugh, "you are a very naughty little girl to figure away in point. Pray, who do you think will look at me and my Flanders lace when you are near me?"

"Bless my life, Wenefrede," cried Mr.

Llewelyn, as he laid hold of her ruffle, and laughed long and loud, "who do you think I mistook you for when you came into the room? why for the Queen of the Fairies, who had come to dance to David Rhys's harp. But where the deuce did all your finery come from? Did one of the fair family send it you?"

"No, no, sir! it was all bought and paid for by mortal hands," said Wenefrede, with a smile; "and it is Eleanor, kind Eleanor, whom I have to thank for it." And she ran up to her, exclaiming, "How can I ever thank you enough for all these beautiful things?" And, seizing her hand, kissed it over and over again. Eleanor, with some emotion, bent over her and kissed her forehead; but the emotion quickly passed away; and when Mrs. Llewelyn came forward and poured forth a torrent of thanks for her munificent present to her child, she was answered by Eleanor in her usually cold tone; but with more than her customary haughtiness.

"Madam," she said, "I wished, for my own sake, to see the daughter of my father dressed in a style suitable to her rank in life; thanks are, therefore, quite superfluous."

"What a pity, then, that I wasted my time on such a busy night as this in offering them," said the imperturbable Mrs. Llewelyn.

"Would I had the power, as well as the inclination, to punish you for your insolence to my mother," muttered Howel (who was standing near), in a tone of suppressed rage.

"Do your worst, sir," replied Eleanor, in a most provokingly calm voice.

"If you love me, Howel," said Eva, in a low, anxious tone, "you will be calm."

"Eva, there are few things I could not do for love of you; but to be calm when I hear my mother insulted is an impossibility. Why it would rouse the indignation of a cold-blooded Iclander, could he but hear the contemptuous tone in which Eleanor frequently speaks to my mother."

"Then what," said Eva, trying to smile,

must be the effect produced on a hot-blooded Welshman?"

"Drive him mad, as at times it well nigh does me," exclaimed Howel, whilst his eyes flashed "with virtuous indignation." But a glance at Eva's flushed cheeks and anxious countenance restored him to his usual composure; and pressing her trembling hand, he observed, with a most love-like smile, "You are most beautifully and becomingly dressed, Eva. I really feel as if I were not worthy to walk by your side in such a plain and unfashionable suit. Now, do not you think that it would have been a very sisterly and pleasing piece of attention on the part of Eleanor, had she, at the same time that she ordered a dress similar to yours for Wenefrede, bespoke a wig and suit of clothes, as fashionable as Gladstone's, for her loving brother?"

Eva, anxious to withdraw his thoughts from Eleanor, cast a glance around her, and then observed, "As Mr. Llewelyn is safe at the other end of the room, I may venture on a

quotation or two from Shakspeare, and say, that 'it would make me mad to see you shine so brisk, and smell so sweet, and talk so like a waiting gentlewoman,' as my cousin Herbert was doing just now about his dress. Look! he is at this very instant exhibiting to Wenefrede his cambric handkerchief, which is not only embroidered, but trimmed with lace. And then, he 'is perfumed like a milliner,' with some of Mr. Charles Lillie's most expensive essences."

"Gladstone certainly thinks too much of the outward man," said Howel; "but, nevertheless, he is a very fine fellow, and a most agreeable companion. I hope Wenefrede may not find him too agreeable for her peace of mind. Look!" he exclaimed, with a smile that was followed by a sigh, "with what childlike delight she is examining his worked collar and gaily-embroidered waistcoat."

Mrs. Llewelyn joined them at this instant, and asked Eva if all the fashionable young men in London were dressed as splendidly as

her cousin. "I am afraid," said she, "that he will turn the heads of more than half the girls in the room: aye, and of some of the old women, too: for Mrs. Hughes, of the Brin, declares that she could sit all night looking at him and his lovely lavender coat; and Mrs. Roberts, of Plas Coch, cannot keep her eyes off his flesh-coloured silk stockings, with their gay gold clocks."

"And pray, my dear mother," asked Howel, "what part of my friend's dress do you admire the most?"

"Well, indeed, Howel bach, I can hardly tell you; but I am much amused with those droll-looking, high, red heels that he has to his shoes. Of course they are very fashionable, but I cannot say that they suit my taste."

If Gladstone was not a perfect Adonis on this occasion, the blame did not rest with his peruquier, or his tailor: for they had most decidedly vied to render him "a combination and a form indeed," well calculated to lead

captive the hearts of silly women. Whether the list of his admirers at the hall was a long or a short one we have not been able to ascertain; but we fear that poor Wenefrede's name would have stood at the very top of it. She appeared as if quite fascinated by his charms: if he were not by her side, her eyes followed him. She listened for no voice but his; and when he spoke her whole attention was fixed to the place where he stood.

Howel watched her "more in sorrow than in anger;" and turning to Eva, exclaimed, in a low voice, "I am afraid I have acted very imprudently in asking Gladstone here. Why, Wenefrede is more than half in love with him already; and if he should choose her for his partner for the dance, hers will be quite a lost case."

"I think," replied Eva, "that my cousin is quite as much delighted with Wenefrede as she is with him; and"—But at this instant, the music of many harps was heard in the hall, and Eva's speech remained unfinished.

And now the important business of choosing partners commenced. Next to choosing a partner for life, choosing one for a country dance might have been looked upon, at this period, as the most important event in a man's life: for he could not transfer her at the end of the dance to her mother or aunt, should he find her heavy on hand, and "duller than the dull weed that roots itself at ease on Lethé's wharf." Nay, should she prove as difficult to move as Penmaen Mawr, still would he be condemned to drag her down the middle, and then, with "toil and trouble"—to bring her up again to the top—to whirl her through all the mazes of the most intricate dances that were called for by a merciless couple who could "trip it fleetly" during the live long night: his partner she was, and unless he could contrive to persuade her to sprain her ankle, his partner she must remain till the music had ceased, the supper had been eaten, and the most indefatigable dancers were satisfied. Herbert advanced with a most gallant

air towards the spot where Eleanor stood, and requested the honour of her hand for that evening ; but Eleanor, with a most gracious smile, observed,—

“ Dancing, even in my youthful days, Mr. Gladstone, was an amusement that did not suit my taste ; and of late years I have entirely declined participating in it. But,” she added, bending her head most gracefully and graciously towards him, “ it will afford me much pleasure to be a spectator of Mr. Gladstone’s skill in an art in which I have been informed he pre-eminently excels.”

Herbert bowed so low that his wig nearly touched the hem of the haughty dame’s dress, and modestly expressed his fears lest her expectations might not be realized. He then turned to Wenefrede and hoped that she had not made a similar vow to her sister’s.

“ Oh, no, no !” exclaimed Wenefrede, with extreme earnestness and simplicity, whilst a most lovely blush spread over her face ; “ I have made no such vow, and will dance for

Eleanor and myself too, should you wish it. I should detest a love-spinning day were it not for the ball in the evening: for I soon grow weary of spinning; but, oh! I do love dancing!"

"Allow me the pleasure of conducting one of Terpsichore's fairest admirers to the hall," said Herbert, presenting his left hand to Wenefrede, with a smile; and then turning to Eleanor, he offered her his right, which was graciously accepted. Poor Wenefrede, though her very fingers were tingling with delight, and her heart was fluttering with happiness, yet felt that her happiness would have been even greater had she known whether Terpsichore was a man or a woman, and in what quarter of the globe he or she might reside. Howel "did fret," and Howel "did fume," as the trio passed him on their way to the hall; and again did he regret having invited Gladstone to his father's house. But Eva only laughed at him, and recommended him not to look so "heroically miserable," or his

mother would observe it and look miserable also. Much to Herbert's astonishment, every servant of the household, from the red-armed scullion up to the respectable grey-headed butler and housekeeper, was allowed to partake of the amusements of the evening. Nor was his astonishment lessened on beholding many a portly Mrs Evans (who had long passed her grand climacteric), grey-headed Mr. Jones, and Hughes, for whom a bed or an arm chair by the fire would have appeared a more suitable place than a ball-room, stand up to dance. Mrs. Llewelyn opened the ball with "a good portly man, and a corpulent, his age inclining to three score;" whilst Mr. Llewelyn's partner could boast of having seen quite as many winters, and of weighing nearly as many stones. But if youth and lightness of figure were lacking, "mirth" had evidently "admitted them of her crew;" and it was also evident that they did not draw any derogatory comparisons that might have affected their self-love whilst watching their more juvenile

and slender companions. Nor was the love of dancing confined to the elderly gentry of the party; for, standing somewhat conspicuously forward in the middle of the long, long set, might be seen our old friend Evan (Mrs. Wynn), who, not a little vain of most of his performances, was notoriously so of his dancing. From the partner he had selected, it would appear that he was determined to have "no rival near his throne;" for it was no other than the unweildy Betty Thomas, who far exceeded in height, as well as bulk, the slight, active old man. But never was vanity doomed to be more completely mortified than on the present occasion: poor Evan advanced with his very best step, but no one regarded it; all eyes were fixed upon Betty Thomas; for not only were her steps very superior to those of her partner, but so lightly did she move that her foot hardly seemed to touch the floor. It was a strange sight to see this tun of a woman gliding down the dance with noiseless steps, and performing the whole of

her part with considerable grace. "Who is she? Where did she come from?" was asked by numbers; but no one present could answer the questions; for the farmer's wife from the neighbourhood of Conway, with whom Betty Thomas had arrived in the morning, had returned home early in the day, in consequence of not feeling well.

Old Evan, though mortified and astonished, was still determined not to be out-done "by one of woman born;" and when the all but "never-ending, still-beginning" dance was at last brought to a close, he advanced, with a good deal "of modest assurance," towards the centre of the hall, and challenged Betty Thomas to cut capers with him. The challenge was hardly uttered before it was accepted. Old Evan cut capers that a Zoolu might have sighed in vain to surpass. "Now," cried he, in a breathless tone, when at last he condescended to touch the floor with his foot, "now, beat that if he can, Mistress Bette."

"Only bend him's head a little, and he will cut capers high as she."

Evan looked most sceptically at Betty, but, nevertheless, lowered his head the half of an inch. Betty begged he would lower it a whole inch.

"Oh! ah! him thought how it would be," said Evan, with a knowing wink at Howel; but his triumph was of short duration, for Betty cut a caper, not only as high as his head, but at length laid her large hand on his shoulder, and leaped over his head easily and cleverly, alighting on the floor as lightly as if she had been a feathered Mercury, instead of a British amazon. A long and loud laugh rung through the hall; and before it had subsided, the crest-fallen and indignant Evan had quitted it, attended by the compassionating old housekeeper, who instantly procured for him a horn of very strong ale, hoping that it would prove a palatable and expeditious remedy for his wounded feelings. Betty Thomas did not join in the laugh that followed this most unfeminine

exploit, but looked around her, with an expression of sly gravity in her face, to see what effect it had produced amongst the higher powers. Mr. Llewelyn swore loudly that it was a capital leap, and all laughed save Eleanor, who "raised her stately head," and indignantly demanded how she dared take so unwarrantable a liberty in her presence? But her indignation speedily changed to fright, when Betty suddenly danced up to her, singing in a singularly wild and rapid manner. That the intellects of the poor woman were deranged now became the prevailing opinion, and the propriety of removing her from the hall was suggested by numbers. But how "this consummation so devoutly to be wished" was to be effected was the question; for, if any one attempted to approach her, she bounded off as if she had been composed of cork. Once she darted up to Eleanor, and offered to run a race with her; and after laughing mischievously at the fright she had occasioned her, left her, and ran after Gladstone,

whom she challenged to a wrestling match. Howel, after many unsuccessful attempts, at last succeeded in getting close to her, and was in the very act of seizing her by the arm, when she sprang over the back of a large oak chair, and seated herself on it, looking coolly up in his face, with a most impudent wink of her right eye, and exclaiming, "Howel dear, can you do that?"

"I will try, if you promise me, should I succeed, that you will go with me into the inner hall, and teach me the words of the last song you favoured us with," said Howel.

"Well, well, Howel dear, so I will—don't be frightened, there's a fine fellow." And she gave him a slap on his back, by way of encouragement, that might have killed "a sound divine," but produced little effect on his manly frame. He cleared the chair, evidently to the no small chagrin of Betty Thomas; but she said, "a promise was a promise," and she allowed him to lead her down the hall. But it was long before they reached the door that

led into the inner hall, for she would stop after every third step she took to make low courtesies to the company; at length she was fairly out of the room, and Mr. Llewelyn and several of the gentlemen present were on the point of following her, when, before they could reach the door, Howel returned. It was very evident that his short tête-à-tête with poor Betty had afforded him much amusement; but when asked by many curious and anxious voices what he had done with her, he only replied, that he had left her in good and safe custody. The door was speedily thrown wide open, and hand in hand entered Evan and his late facetious partner; who, having thrown off her cap, proved, most unequivocally, that she was no gentle damsel, but a man. No sooner had the light fallen full upon his countenance than dozens of tongues exclaimed, "Why, if it is not Billy Bangor, the fool, from Mostyn! will he never grow weary of his practical jokes?" The dancing recommenced, "and all went merry as a marriage bell." Billy insisted

upon retaining Evan for his partner, and at length the old man was flattered by the company into standing up with him ; but his look of patient endurance of the indignity that had been thrust upon him in the shape of a partner, was suddenly changed to a burst of violent indignation, when Billy Bangor sent one of the servants into the kitchen to bring from thence his fool's cap, which he had brought with him in a box.

"Him don't think it will dance with such a jack-pudding," cried Evan, stamping with rage ; "it see him in a very hot place first."

"Well now, suppose I should chance to go there before you," said Billy, with a most aggravating smile, "I'll act the part of a neighbour, and bespeak a monstrous snug corner for my dear, old friend : you shall find it well aired when you come."

"Confound its impudence," cried Evan ; "what say Madam Wynn, if he hear it."

"She would say, oh Billy, Billy Bangor ! you are a sad, reprobate dog, mend your ways, sirrah !"

"He! my Madam Wynn, dear old master's wife, he say such words! no he—he—"

Indignation stopped him in the midst of his speech, and Billy being the last man in the world to turn away wrath with a soft answer, considerably increased that of Evan by finishing his speech for him, mimicking his voice and manner to the life.

"No," he exclaimed, in a tone that many of the company actually mistook for that of Evan, "no, he love idle dissolute characters, he heart full love for all men."

Evan could not stand this last speech; and long experience having proved to him that meddling with fools leads to exactly the same result as meddling with nettles—that he only got stung for his pains—he shrunk away from the dancers, and retreated to a warm corner by the side of his kind old friend Mrs. Grace Jones, the housekeeper. Billy soon persuaded one of the prettiest girls in the room to become his partner in the dance.

"Well, good fool," said Howel, who had

been listening to his conversation with Evan, "you have managed to get rid of an old partner, and to supply his place, not only with a young, but a blooming one, in a way that would have brought no discredit on a wise man."

"My fool's cap was off," said Billy, popping it, at the same time, on his head; "more than half of my folly lies in my cap when my head is in it, as you may perchance have discovered, my good sir; and you too, young lady, whom men call fair and good—but, remember, no man, woman, or child, ever heard me say that I thought you one or the other. No! I would hite my tongue out first."

"What mean you, sir fool?" asked Howel; "for surely you can see that she is fair, and you must have heard that she is good."

"Yes, and something about her good taste to boot," retorted Billy, looking slyly at Howel from under his dark eyebrows. "But I have a regard for you, young Squire, and for the

family at Plas Conway, and that regard shuts my mouth whenever the name of Eva Wynn is mentioned. For how think you it would sound should it be observed that Eva Wynn is fair to look upon, and it were asked who advised you of that; and the answer should be, the fool at Mostyn? Eva Wynn is wise! Who says so? The fool at Mostyn. Eva Wynn is good! Who is the trumpeter of her good deeds? The fool at Mostyn. Eva Wynn has made a most excellent choice—in a husband at least. So thinks the fool at Mostyn. But ‘a rod for the fool’s back,’ said, once upon a time, a very wise man; and lest you should think it a proof of your superior wisdom to follow his advice, I will take leave to dance out of your way; so a very good evening to you, young Squire.”

“‘Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him,’” said Eva to Howel; who, taking the hint, contented himself with shaking his head at the privileged and incorrigible Billy Bangor, and led Eva

back to her place in the dance. At length,
even

“The dancing pair, that simply sought renown
By holding out to tire each other down,”

gave in, and it was unanimously agreed that dancing should cease for the night. But “succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired,” till an excellent supper, more to be remarked for its profusion than its elegance, was spread upon the high table. Nor was the long side-table less abundantly supplied; and both the high and low table were speedily surrounded by hungry guests, who, if they were to be judged by their “loud laugh,” possessed most “vacant minds.” Herbert was not a little surprised to find that a Miss Evans, who sat on his left hand, and who was introduced to him by Wenefrede, as the daughter of the clergyman of the parish, was as ignorant of the English language as the wife of Mortimer, and that hers was by no means a solitary case: English being only spoken by those who addressed themselves to him, and few persons,

with the exception of the family at the hall, attempted it. But Herbert, at least for this evening, was "all for love, and the world forgot;" he wished to hear no voice but that of Wenefrede's, and he cared "not a jot" whether Welsh or Hebrew was spoken by the rest of the party. However delightful this exclusive attention might prove to Wenefrede, it was the occasion of his sailing very rapidly to the northward of the good graces of many a pretty young lady who had, at the commencement of the evening, felt some slight flutterings about her heart, brought on by his handsome face, elegant figure and address, and splendid attire. Comparisons, that could he have understood them, would not have been very soothing to his vanity, began to buzz around, made between him and Howel; of whom it was observed, that although his lady-love was seated by his side, yet, that he exerted himself to amuse and render happy all who were within reach of the sound of his voice and attentions. Supper ended, and a

toast and a sentiment having passed round, most of the young people quitted the table and crowded around the harps, whilst Mr. Llewelyn remained with the elderly gentlemen and ladies, who preferred gossip, ale, and mead, to flirting, poetry, and music. The old harper, Roderic, played a favourite air, and Howel, who was standing next to him, accompanied it with a penillion, or stanza, composed extempore for the occasion. Eva, Eleanor, Wenefrede, and several of the young persons of the party, sang, alternately, a penillion ; and numbers whom "the gods had not made poetical," and who had not been inspired by passing a night on the black stone of Ardu, but yet possessed good ears and fine voices, joined in with a stanza suitable to the subject, selected from the exhaustless store-house furnished for them by the ancient bards, on every subject from the sublime to the ridiculous. The heroic deeds of their ancestors was the theme chosen on the present occasion, and each succeeding stanza seemed to call forth a more thrilling

sensation of enthusiasm, not only in the hearts of the singers, and the groups that surrounded them, but in those of the most determined ale-bibbers at the high table ; who might be seen, one by one, arising from it, and, with noiseless steps and stealthy motions, mixing among the silent crowd that encircled the harps. But when the sound of many harps, with melancholy cadence, poured forth a requiem for the dead who had fallen in defence of their native land, whilst sweet voices breathed a plaintive chant, the fire of enthusiasm lighted up the eyes of the men, and tears rolled down the cheeks of the females ; and at this instant, had one voice but cried "to arms ! to arms ! the enemy are upon us," youth and age would have rushed forth to battle, determined to conquer or to die, and

"Leaving in battle no blot on their name,
Look proudly to Heaven from the death-bed of fame."

After the excitement occasioned by these heroic stanzas had subsided, a love ditty was sung, and many a maiden "blushed rosy red,"

and many a timid youth cast his eyes on the ground, when the malicious composer of a stanza introduced some pointed allusion to the state of his or her heart. Towards the close of the evening, some very satirical verses were composed, in which Eva Wynn did not spare the fairies' musician, David Rhys. And Billy Bangor made good use of the opportunity it afforded him of exercising his wicked wit against every one. The song and the joke went round till the clock struck twelve, and then might be heard the sound of many voices calling for ladies' cloaks, hoods, walking-shoes, or ponies. The trampling of horses' feet, and the departure of elderly matrons, speedily followed; the elderly matrons expressing their unfeigned horror at the lateness of the hour, and wondering, not what their neighbours, for they did not possess any, but the moon, the sole witness of their midnight wanderings, would say and think of them.

There was such violent shaking of hands as each guest quitted the hall, that it was won-

derful the aid of a surgeon was not required, and such a number of hospitable hopes were uttered by Mr. and Mrs. Llewelyn that all their guests would soon favour them again with their company, that Herbert's habitual politeness failed him; and weary of listening to long speeches, uttered in an unknown tongue, he threw himself down on a bench by the side of old Evan, and asked him if he did not feel tired.

"Him tired! it not know what tired mean: it dance with Master Herbert, late as was, for the best."

"Done!" cried Herbert. "But what shall we dance, Evan? A minuet?"

"A minuet!" repeated Evan, in a tone of extreme contempt; "Oh, no, no! Why, him see that confounded big fool at Mostyn dance minuet. No, Master Herbert, it dance steps, could dance thirty, thirty years ago; dear old Master Colonel Wynn see it often; but it growing old; only dance twenty, now." And the old man, feeling that his hour of triumph

had arrived, danced and capered and pointed his toe, like a lad of sixteen. Herbert, with the aid of a few flourishes, contrived to keep pace with him in the number of his steps; but at length the old man sprung from the ground and struck the soles of his feet together twice before he touched it again.

"Now, Master Herbert, him do that?" he exclaimed, in an exulting tone.

"No, by Jupiter," cried Herbert; "you have beat me fairly, Evan. That is a caper I cannot cut." And throwing himself into a chair, he indulged in a hearty laugh, in which he was joined by all the remaining guests; who, at the same time, warmly applauded the agility of old Evan. With a grin of delight that he vainly endeavoured to conceal, Evan bowed his thanks, and quitted the hall a proud and happy man. And thus ended the love-spinning day.

CHAPTER VI.

"We 'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart."

HAMLET.

WEEKS passed by, and Herbert was still an inmate of Glyn Llewelyn Hall ; and although he frequently named a day for his departure, yet one-half of the entreaties used to induce him to remain would have been more than sufficient to have made him change his plans, so little inclination did he feel to leave a house in which he had become perfectly domesticated, and where love had gilded every object with "couleur de rose," and given to buttermilk the flavour of "parfait amour." Herbert had won the heart of Mr. Llewelyn by listening to his long stories, and laughing

at the right place ; of Mrs. Llewelyn, by the deep interest he appeared to take in all her domestic concerns ; of Eleanor, by his elegant manners and respect for her long line of ancestors ; and that of poor little Wenefrede for nearly the same reason that Tilburina's was won by Don Whiskerandos—because he was the last man in the world that ought to have won it. At least such was Howel's opinion ; and earnestly but vainly did he point out to his father and mother the danger of detaining Herbert longer amongst them. They could not be made to understand that a child of theirs was not a suitable bride for a duke, leaving a lord quite out of the question ; and after many long debates that ended as they began, with each party retaining their own opinion, he gave up the point in despair. But when he told his sorrow to Eva, she removed a heavy weight from his heart, by pointing out to him that neither Lord nor Lady Gladstone were likely to advance any very strenuous objections to a Welsh daughter-in-law.

"It is true," she added, "that my uncle has grown dreadfully fond of money in his old age; but (and she blushed a deep crimson) if money should be the only obstacle to the marriage of Herbert with dear Wenefrede, I have more money than I—than—than—we shall ever want; and when I am of age, some arrangements can easily be made that will set all anxiety on that subject at rest."

"Before that period has arrived, dearest Eva, I hope that you will have become my wife, and that I shall have taught you not to be so prodigal of your money," said Howel, smiling. "But should Gladstone marry Wenefrede, take my word for it she shall be no portionless maiden, even if am I obliged to sell all I am worth in the world, down to my horse and hound. Wenefrede, however, will be entitled to several thousand pounds at the death of my father; and I will, should I survive him, take care that the thousands shall multiply. For, oh, Eva! it is gall and wormwood to me, when I think that the Gladstones

may say that I invited their son to Glyn Llewelyn to catch him for my sister."

"I never saw a person less likely to make such a remark than my uncle," said Eva. "So, pray, my dear Howel, do not look as if you had been attending an oracle in the cave of Trophonius; and I will promise you that, should Wenefrede take my cousin 'for better for worse,' we will give her such a fortune as shall cause my kind, pompous uncle to open his great black eyes in astonishment."

"God bless you, Eva! You are"—What, was never known; for this conversation, which passed in the drawing-room at Glyn Llewelyn, was suddenly interrupted by the entrance of Herbert and (not Wenefrede, but) Eleanor. The latter, apparently, was in a most happy state of mind; for, with a smile on her lips, she observed, "I suspect that you will laugh at us, Miss Wynn, when I tell you our errand. We are come in search of the family pedigree, which Mr. Gladstone has expressed a wish to look over."

"You can vouch, Eva, for the house of Gladstone being one of ancient date; but I find we are not worthy to stand behind the chair of a Llewelyn," said Gladstone, with a smile.

Eleanor opened a very ancient, black-looking cabinet, with a curiously-carved lock, and drew from it a pedigree nearly forty feet in length, beautifully illuminated. It was the work of a celebrated bard, who, in common with numbers of his brethren, was not only a poet and musician, but a herald and genealogist.

"You are probably aware," said Howel, with mock gravity, "that the pedigree of the Mostyns was preserved in the ark; and *pairs* only finding admission there, I have always maintained that ours was its companion; and as Billy Bangor has never brought forward any satisfactory arguments against my theory, I am convinced that it is quite correct."

Herbert smiled, and Eleanor was too busily engaged in pointing out her descent from

blood-royal, to spare time even to bestow a reproving look on her brother. Herbert, as we have elsewhere observed, was a herald; and the pedigree of the Llewelyns, with its beautiful illuminations, possessed an interest for him that few persons, unacquainted with heraldry, could comprehend. He pored over it with an earnestness and a delight that quite astonished Howel; for though, could the secrets of his heart have been laid bare, it might have been discovered that pride of family was his besetting sin, yet he could not understand a person taking pleasure in tracing his neighbour's pedigree up to the flood, or wasting his time in conjecturing what might have been the quarterings in Noah's coat of arms, or the mottos adopted by his sons.

"That lady," said Eleanor, placing her finger on the name of Helen ab Llewelyn, "was the mother of the great hero, Owen Glendwr; and through her *we* claim descent from Llewelyn the Great, last prince of Wales."

Howel and Eva soon left the two heralds to pursue their researches alone, and set out on a mountain ramble; purposing to pay a visit to the foster-mother of the former. The way (for path it could not be called) to the farm she occupied, led them up the beautiful vale in which the hall was situated. A grey rock of majestic height and stern venerable appearance, arose on one side, looking like an impregnable fortress, raised by nature to protect the inhabitants of the Glyn from the assaults of their enemies. At a short distance from the rock might be seen, rushing down the mountain, a broad sheet of water, that seemed as if it was composed of "snowy dew" and foam, which glittered in the sun so that no eye, save that of the eagle, could have gazed steadfastly upon it. Our pedestrians at length arrived at the home of Molly Davies. It was a small farm-house situated in a low valley, and surrounded by bleak, bold alpine scenery, here and there relieved by the hardy whitty and the fir, "that roots

itself and mocks the howling tempest," in even a more stormy climate than that of North Wales. Bustle and confusion seemed to reign, not only in the farm-yard and out-buildings, but within the house: the whole family was, in fact, preparing to remove to their summer residence. The only approach to the house was through a very dirty farm-yard, which was surrounded by untidy-looking outbuildings, with the thatched roofs of which the wind had taken strange and very apparent liberties. Gabbling geese were sailing over a black-looking pond; dogs were barking; sheep bleating; whilst a flock of goats added their far from harmonious notes to the rural concert.

But geese, dogs, sheep, and goats, united, made less noise than did the single tongue of Molly Davies, who was mounted on a rough kind of step-ladder, that led to the granary, and whose shrill scolding voice, energetic actions of hands and body, accompanied by violent denunciations against her

idle, thoughtless daughters, who were arranging the dairy utensils on a kind of truck, offered a strange contrast to her good-humoured countenance and merry eye. The instant she caught sight of Eva and Howel, she ran down the steps, crossed the yard with a few strides, that were by no means impeded by the length of her petticoats, and received her guests with a mixture of love and respect, that might be sought for in vain in the present century, even in the mountains of Wales.

The apartment into which Molly ushered her visitors, like the stall of the cobbler, "served for kitchen, for parlour, and hall." It was a long, low room; and the sides of dried bacon, beef, and mutton, suspended from its ceiling, gave Howel's lofty head many a brush before he reached the wide, open chimney. Before the turf fire lay a large black and white shepherd's dog, whose sharp, snappish bark showed that age, and a life of care, had not improved a temper that in youth had not been remarkable

for its sweetness ; but a kind word or two, and a pat on his rough back, soon reconciled him to the presence of the visitors who had disturbed his after-dinner nap. The furniture in the room, though scanty, was all of oak ; and the unsparing labour of several generations had rendered chairs, tables, presses, and clock, as black and brilliant as jet. The clock was by far the most valuable and valued piece of furniture in the room ; it was made of oak, whilst its face was ornamented, at its four corners, with the head of a bright gilt cherub, with wings of dazzling blue fringed with green. A medallion at the top contained the whole length figure of an angel, whose gaudy wings quivered, and bright green eyes rolled in " a fine frenzy," whenever the clock struck, to the never-ending astonishment of the family, and all who beheld it. The door, having a curiously-worked brass lock, and very antique brass key, was divided into three compartments, in the upper of which might be seen Adam and Eve in paradise. Adam figuring

away in a court-dress, with a sword by his side, and presenting Eve, who was attired in a full plaited gown and high Elizabethan ruff, with a nosegay. The second compartment represented Cain killing Abel with a horse pistol; whilst the third was appropriated to Jacob's dream, in which the compassionate artist had substituted a red velvet cushion for the pillow of stones, whilst angels of every colour of the rainbow appeared to be quarrelling for precedence, as they ascended and descended the ladder. The lower end of the room was occupied by a large chest, filled with linen spun by the females of the family; and by a smaller one containing oatmeal. The floor was formed of clay, and neither glass nor china adorned a corner cupboard, which was filled with pewter plates and dishes, wooden bowls and drinking horns. Yet Molly Davies was considered rich; for her farm of sixty acres, besides an extensive sheep-walk, was her own property. It had been possessed by her husband's family from time immemorial,

and had been bequeathed from father to son, with "a good name," which, unsullied, had descended to his son, and so on *ad infinitum*, Molly's sons and daughters, with her invaluable assistance, performed all the labours of the farm. At seed time, or harvest time, neighbours would gladly lend their assistance; a kindness always returned in kind. Molly Davies brought her visitors large bowls of butter-milk, and a platter well filled with oaten cakes; her homely fare was offered without a single apology, and it was soon evident that none was necessary, for speedily she was called upon to fill afresh the bowls with butter-milk, and replenish the platter with oaten cakes. A summons from the yard for Molly, quickly took her out of the kitchen, and one of her daughters, who had been for some time hovering about the door, on seeing that the coast was clear, slipped in: she was Howel's foster sister, and was greeted by him with great kindness. After many blushes, many courtesies and apologies, and many "a sidelong glance" at

Eva, the poor girl, in a low and hesitating voice, began to tell her tale: for, unlike the "needy knife-grinder," she had one to tell.

"John Hughes, of Pen Craig," she said, holding up one corner of her apron, and folding and unfolding it repeatedly, "is dead, sir."

"I was very sorry to hear that such was the case, Peggy," said Howel; for though he guessed from the commencement of the tale what would most probably be the conclusion, he was wickedly bent on holding out no helping hand to the blushing damsel.

"I wanted mother to go down and speak to the squire about the farm last night, but she said she was already in his debt for kindness shown to her and her family, hundreds and hundreds of times, and that there would be many asking him to let them have the farm, and so she would not plague him about it, for any of her kin."

"Well, but surely, Peggy," said Howel, laughing, "you do not think of going to reside

at so lonely a spot as Pen Craig, by yourself?"

"Oh no, Master Howel, bach!" exclaimed poor Peggy, "it is for young Owen Roberts, not for myself, that I am asking it."

"For Owen Roberts of Plas Hêw, Peggy?"

"Yes; sure, Master Howel, you would know him directly, if you were to see him."

"Oh, I know him well, Peggy, for many a wrestling match have we had together; and you may depend upon my speaking a good word for him with my father, for I believe him to be well deserving of it. But I suppose as he is so anxious for a farm of his own, that he is going to be married. Can you tell me, Peggy, if his bride will be Nancy Price of Plas Coke. She is a pretty girl, and will have a good fortune."

"Nancy Price!" exclaimed Peggy: "no, indeed; why, I have heard him say that, if ever he thought of her, it was when he was so young that he did not know what he was thinking about; and he quite hates her now, and

wonders anybody with eyes in their head should call her handsome."

"As you appear to be deep in Owen Robert's confidence, Peggy," said Eva, "perhaps you can tell us who is to be his wife?"

Peggy did not answer this question, but her blushes and smiles spoke quite as eloquently as words could have done, and were quite as well understood by those who witnessed them.

"I will venture to promise the farm of Pen Craig to Owen Roberts," said Howel: "and should I approve of the maiden he has fixed upon for a wife, why, Peggy, you may tell him that I will stock the farm for him. But if he wishes me to dance at his wedding, it must take place soon, for I am daily expecting to be ordered to join my regiment, which is in a country he probably never heard of."

"God bless you, Master Howel, bach," was all poor Peggy's feelings would allow her to utter; and she made her escape into the cheese room just as her mother returned to the kitchen. Eva and Howel at length rose to de-

part; Howel feeling happy at the idea of having made Peggy's warm heart beat high with joy. The parting with Molly Davies and her foster child was a most affecting scene. She appeared to look upon it as an everlasting farewell, and threw her arms around his neck, and sobbed as if her heart was breaking; then drew back and begged his pardon, then threw her arms around him again, and sobbed louder than before. Affection so warm and disinterested, would have raised tender emotions in any heart possessed of human feelings; and Howel's, which was alive to a look or word of kindness, but that his manhood forbade it, would have answered sob for sob. Poor Eva stood by vainly endeavouring to restrain her tears, and thinking if such was the parting of Howel with his foster mother, what would be the struggle when he said that dreadful word "farewell" to her. At length Molly Davies drew a long deep sigh, unclasped her arms from Howel's neck, and, as if not daring to trust herself with another look, she threw her

apron over her head, and ran sobbing into the house. Then came forth, from the barns and sheds, four short, sturdy lads, and two rosy-cheeked, red-armed maidens, Molly's sons and daughters, each anxious to have a parting word and shake of the hand with the young squire.

"Well, now, and where is Peggy?" asked one of the young men: "why, she will be like to break her heart, if she does not see Master Howel before he leaves."

"I have seen her, Jack, and wished her good-bye," said Howel: "but I did not tell her that I thought she would make Owen Roberts a prudent, good wife. Do you think, Jack, that she would take him 'for better, for worse?'"

"Well, indeed, no, Master Howel," said Jack, with a broad grin: "why, I have heard her teasing mother to let her marry him, scores of times."

"Farewell, and God bless you," said Howel, shaking hands all round, "and should I have

left Wales before the wedding takes place, I will leave orders that plenty of ale shall be sent up to drink my health in ; and Roderic shall bring his harp and play for you. And I hope, should I ever return amongst you again, that I shall find some young farmer who is looking out for a farm and wife, who will run off with you, Betty."

Betty courtesied and blushed, and thanked him for his good wishes, and hoped that he would return very soon. Howel and Eva amused themselves during their walk to the hall in forming numerous plans, all of which were intended to benefit Owen Roberts and his bride elect. Mr. Llewelyn was the first person they encountered as they returned to the Glyn ; and he entered, with the fervour of youth, into all the different arrangements proposed to him by his son and Eva, for the present and future benefit of Peggy Davies and Owen Roberts.

After a long discussion touching repairs, &c., &c., Mr. Llewelyn exclaimed,—

"Bless my heart, Eva, I may as well give in at once, for you and Howel will have it all your own way in the long run; and I give you my word of honour, that I will go up to Pen Craig this evening, and order everything to be made neat and tidy for the new tenant."

When Mr. Llewelyn returned from Pen Craig, he found a letter from his friend Mr. Owen, of Llancarnedd; which letter informed him that his presence in Anglesea would be required on the following day.

"Now, Master Gladstone," said Mr. Llewelyn, "as you have not seen the island, what say you to our going over in a body, and storming the castle of my worthy old friend Owen, of Llancarnedd?"

Much to the surprise of Herbert, not a single objection was made to this proposal; and it was unanimously declared to be a very agreeable one. Now, although Herbert had discovered, during his long visit at Glyn Llewelyn, that whole families frequently arrived, and remained several days, who had not

been summoned there by an invitation ; yet he could not help feeling somewhat alarmed lest a party consisting of eight persons, dropping in quite unexpectedly at worthy Mr. Owen's, might occasion a famine in his house ; and that some of the party would go supperless to bed, should he be so fortunate as to meet with one unoccupied. He ventured to hint to Eva the fears he entertained on the subject, though he felt convinced before he spoke, that she would only laugh at them ; and laugh she did : but when her mirth had a little abated, she informed him that Mrs. Owen, though a remarkably amiable and good-tempered woman, would have worked herself up into a tremendous rage, had she but heard his doubts respecting the state of her larder.

When Herbert discovered that he was in no danger of supping with Duke Humphrey, or sleeping with his own horse at Llancarnedd, he entered with all his heart into the simple preparations that were considered necessary for their journey—for such it was deemed in

the reign of Queen Anne: locomotion being little in vogue at that period, either in England or Wales.

Horses and ponies were waiting for their riders, by the entrance gate, at an early hour on the following morning. Mr. Llewelyn's favourite horse, Taliesin, condescended to bear a pillion, on which Mrs. Llewelyn, the most punctual of housewives, might be seen seated, before the rest of the party had even made their appearance in the hall. Herbert assisted Eleanor to mount her horse, but before he had time to offer his services to Wenefrede, she had sprung from the ground, seated herself on the back of her pony, arranged her riding cloak and hood, and was trotting gaily after Taliesin. A ride across the Lafan sands, of nearly four miles, brought the party to Beaumaris ferry, and at length they were all safely landed at the point called Osmund's Air.

We vouch not for the fact, but we have been told that it was so styled after a malefac-

tor of the name of Osmand, who, on his way to the gallows, said he was going to take the air.

The magnificent and lovely scenery on the banks of the Menai, deludes the traveller, as completely as do the apples on the shore of the Dead Sea ; for no sooner had our party ascended a steep hill, than every beautiful feature in the landscape appeared to have vanished, and a dreary waste of dark bog, unrelieved by tree or shrub presented itself, as far as the eye could reach. And it was very much doubted by all the party, whether an occasional melancholy bunch of gorse, that looked as if it had had a fit of the yellow jaundice, and was now sickening with the black disease of the same name ; and bunches of rushes, evidently fellow-sufferers with the gorse, improved the prospect.

"Have we quite taken leave of trees and civilization?" at length asked Herbert, looking around him with anything but an admiring glance.

"Trees would flourish here, as well as they

do in any part of England, if the owners of the land would but plant them," said Eva. "Why Anglesea was formerly called 'the Dark Island,' in consequence of its being covered with wood."

Herbert looked rather incredulous ; and indeed it required all his habitual politeness not to exclaim, "I doubt the fact !"

But although the road was bad, and the country dreary, yet Herbert soon ceased to complain of either the one or the other ; for Wenefrede was all smiles and good-humour ; and she listened with such deep interest to all he uttered, and looked so very lovely in a new riding dress, that he could not keep his eyes off her. Indeed, had not his horse been in the habit of practising the game called "follow the leader," he and his rider might have found themselves in the Irish sea, instead of at Llancarnedd : for not one hint did he bestow on his fleet steed of the way he wished to go.

Vain would it be to attempt to describe the

joy, the noise, the shaking of hands, that followed after the arrival of the party from the Glyn at Llancarnedd. When, at length, something resembling quiet was restored, and the party ushered into a long, low wainscoted room, the windows of which faced the sea, Herbert discovered that the Menai Straits had not monopolized all the beauty of the island. Not only did he behold a sea-view of surpassing beauty, with ships of various sizes passing majestically over its bright and mirror-like surface; but the rock, known by the name of Mynydd Twr—which, after soaring high over the town of Holyhead, appears to look down disdainfully on the far from aristocratic buildings at his feet—proved, when “distance lent enchantment to the view,” to be a very pleasing feature in the landscape.

The Owens having announced to their friends in Holyhead the arrival of the Llewelyns of the Glyn, a large party flocked in to inquire after their healths, and, as a matter of course, to partake of the early supper, which proved

sufficiently substantial to banish all fear of starving from the thoughts of Herbert Gladstone; at least for that night. The ladies soon left the supper table; but their good example shared the same fate as often does good advice: it was not followed by the gentlemen; and the ale-cup went round so often that there was scarcely one of the party on the following morning who might not have made the same enquiry and confession as did Sir Roger Mostyn to Piers Pennant, in a postscript to a letter of some importance, "How does your head this morning? Mine aches confoundedly."

Very probably from their being little accustomed to deep potations of ale, Howel and Gladstone's heads ached more "confoundedly" than did those of the more experienced toppers, and they both looked very guilty and uncomfortable when they took their seats at the breakfast-table. During breakfast, Miss Owen proposed that all the younger members of the party should make an excursion to Capel

Llochwydd, a place Eva and Wenefrede had expressed a great desire to visit.

This chapel, which for ages had been resorted to by pilgrims from all parts of the United Kingdom, who hoped to wash away their sins or diseases in the well of crystal water that it guarded, is situated on a wild gorge above Ogo Llochwydd, which signifies the Cave of Meeting; and surely, never had superstition fixed upon a more fitting spot in which to hold her mysterious rights.

"Hoarse, through each winding creek, the tempest raves,
And hollow rocks repeat the groan of waves."

Nought that speaks of life is to be seen on the desolate, rugged rocks that surround it, except a melancholy heron, who looks a fitting monarch for scenery so wild, trackless, and dreary.

The party set off on horseback to Holyhead, at which place a boat had been ordered to await their pleasure; and wind and tide being favourable, they stepped on board her, and

set sail round the "head," with "youth on the prow, and pleasure at the helm." Unluckily for the party on either side of the boat, pleasure appeared to have confined her favours to that at the helm. Eleanor was in one of her proud and sullen moods; and young Owen, though he was remarkably good-looking and agreeable, could obtain neither a look nor a smile from Wenefrede, who pretended to be watching the waves as they rolled against the boat; but, in fact, she saw nothing distinctly, for her eyes were nearly blinded by her tears.

Poor Wenefrede! she was young—very young; and totally ignorant of the ways of the world, or she would not have felt so bitterly Herbert's carrying on a little flirtation with Miss Owen. Now, though Herbert was doing his best to leave a favourable impression of his mind and manners on Miss Owen, he was not in the most amiable of moods, in consequence of his head still aching confoundedly; and he was almost

ready to quarrel with Eva for having raised expectations that, judging from the commencement of the sail, were little likely to be realized. But this fit of the spleen instantly vanished, when, after sailing for two or three miles along an uninteresting shore, they suddenly rounded a rock, and the boat darting with the swiftness of an arrow between a small island and the mainland into a lovely bay, one of those sublime combinations of rocks of fearful height, "of dark unfathomed caves" and "the troubled sea that cannot rest," burst upon them. Gigantic caves, tenanted by innumerable colonies of sea-gulls, guillemots, cormorants, and razor-bills, who had taken up their summer quarters "where food awaits them copious from the wave," were quickly sailed past.

"Herbert!" exclaimed Eva, to her cousin,—who had evidently forgotten that such a person as Miss Owen of Llancarnedd was by his side, and was standing up in the boat and looking around him in speechless admiration—

"that cave to your left is called the Parliament-house, and I believe the full extent of it has never been discovered. On one side of it is a piece of rock that has been styled the throne; why or wherefore, the godmother that named it would, I suspect, be sorely puzzled to tell you."

"But why is it called the Parliament-house?" demanded Herbert. "Surely there must be some tradition or other which will throw some light on so strange a name for a cave."

"I believe," said Howel, smiling, "that we have a very satisfactory tradition on the subject. It informs us that in consequence of the ceaseless gabble going on within the cave, some wit or other declared that they must be engaged with affairs of state, and said that the cormorants represented the bishops, the peregrine falcons the lords, the razor-bills the commons, and the gulls the people."

The boat now shot across the bay towards

the chasm already noticed as bearing the name of Ogo Llochwydd. The party landed, and commenced climbing up rugged rocks that would have appalled many a stout-hearted lowlander; but along which even the females of the party sprang with the sure-footedness of the chamois. Herbert, although he had learned, during his long residence in its neighbourhood, to walk over the once-dreaded Penmaen Mawr without shuddering, felt somewhat appalled by the steepness of the rocks he was now condemned to climb—for what purpose he had never thought of inquiring; and hardly conscious of what he was saying, he exclaimed, in the words of Sir Walter Raleigh,

“Fain would I climb, but that I fear to fall;”

which line being overheard by Eva, she answered it in the words of Queen Elizabeth:—

“If thy heart fail thee, do not climb at all.”

Adding, in words of her own, “but go back

to the boat, my dear cousin, and remain there till we return. Or if you do not feel inclined to do that, take fast hold of my hand, and I will undertake to carry you safely over this steep and slippery rock."

The landing-place fixed upon by our party has acquired, in the present century, a melancholy interest from its having proved the death bed of many gallant sailors. Their ship, during a bitter night in the month of March, was driven, by a violent storm of wind and snow, upon this shore; where, horrible to relate! although the crew struggled to land, all were found on the following morning stiff and dead. Some had laid themselves down beneath the rocks in despair, and had fallen into a deep sleep, from which, in this world, they were to know no waking; whilst others of a more daring nature, or clinging more fondly to life, had attempted to scale the rocks, to which they were found clinging, with their hands frozen to the projecting points that they had grasped in the agonies of

death. But no prophetic warning of the fearful tragedy which was to be acted on that spot in days to come "cast its shadow before," to chill the gay hearts that were now ascending the rocks "in thoughtlessness and mirth." A short but rugged path brought the party to the chapel *Lochwydd*; on whose time-worn pavement thousands of human beings had knelt down to return thanks to the holy "*Seiriol* the fair, and *Cybi* the tawny," the patron saints of the mountain, for miraculous cures wrought, in cases where all other remedies had failed, by sipping the water of the well in the chann below the chapel. The chapel offered no outward attractions, for it was built of enormous blocks of unhewn stone, and at the first glance looked as if totally devoid of all ornament; but on examining it more carefully, the windows and door frames exhibited much elaborate workmanship. In the memory of man the chapel was perfect; but the curious traveller would now seek for it in vain; for, though it had escaped "the silent stroke of

mouldering age," it could not escape the anti-catholic zeal and religious rage of a worthy old clergyman, who was dreadfully scandalized by the large parties of both sexes that were in the habit of visiting the spot; not in consequence of entertaining faith in the efficacy of the crystal waters of the well as a medicine, but in order to ascertain, by certain mystical ceremonies, whether they would be admitted into the holy state of matrimony during the following year. The chapel was pulled down, and the well filled up, much to the regret of numbers of merry lads and lasses, and a few elderly spinsters. Eleanor had accompanied the party, much to the secret regret of all connected with it; indeed, Mrs. Llewelyn, who was well aware how little pleasure the society of very young people afforded her, had offered to take her place as chaperon, but this kind offer was coolly and decidedly rejected: she having determined to act the part of a spy on Herbert and Miss Owen, the former having paid more attention at supper and breakfast

to the latter than politeness seemed to demand. But Eleanor refused to descend the steep path that led to the well, and seated herself on the rock above, expressing, in no measured terms, her astonishment at rational beings finding amusement in so foolish an exploit. Many circumstances had united to irritate Eleanor: she had passed a sleepless night, in consequence of her bedroom being immediately over the hall in which the noisy revellers had remained carousing till the morning was far advanced; and the loud song, still louder toast, and hurrahs which followed it, had not only banished sleep, but had grated most discordantly on her ears, though such sounds were far from being unfamiliar to them. If Lady Macbeth "should have died hereafter," Eleanor Llewelyn ought to have lived when eight o'clock suppers, strong ale, and regular drinking bouts would be talked of as a "tale of the past," or as "an invention of the enemy." But we must leave Eleanor to her solitary musings, and follow the rest of the party

"down the yawning steep." How they all contrived to arrive in safety at the bottom of the slippery and almost perpendicular flight of time-worn steps, no one could tell; and several of the party confessed to having crawled down on their hands and knees, and yet, with all their precaution, they had very narrowly escaped tumbling head foremost into the well.

"For what ailment is this water considered most efficacious?" asked Herbert.

"For curing headaches it is quite infallible," replied Eva: "pray, allow me to present you with a cup full?"

"Nonsense, Eva, what can make you think that I have a headache to be cured of?" said Herbert, somewhat tartly; but he nevertheless took a small draught of the water. Eva then replenished the cup, and offered it, with a smile on her lips, to Howel, who coloured slightly, but drank every drop contained in the wooden cup; observing, as he returned it, that he had taken it as a charm against any future

headaches. After many very indifferent jokes had been uttered about cures for the heart-sache, which were laughed at quite as heartily as if they had been the most sparkling wit; all present stooped down and filled their mouths with water from the well, and their hands with earth from its brink. Not one drop of the water must be swallowed, or grain of the earth be dropped, or the spell would be broken. Young Owen led the way up the fearful ascent, but light and active as was his figure, his progress much resembled that of the snail which crawled up five feet and then slipped back again four feet; and at length, to the dismay of those who were following after him, his foot slipped, and to the bottom of the steps he must have rolled, had not Howel caught him by the arm, and placed him once more on his feet. The ascent, difficult to surmount under any circumstances, was rendered all but impossible with clasped hands; and after many a fruitless effort and desperate struggle, several members of the party resigned themselves to

celibacy for another year, dropped the damp earth from their hands, and unclosed their lips, from which broke forth a merry laugh : in fact, of all the party, only Miss Owen and Herbert reached the door of the chapel without breaking the spell. Now, Eleanor, although she would not own it even to herself, would have felt more in charity with the whole party, and the world at large, had Wenefrede's name been joined with Herbert's, instead of that of Miss Owen. Unfortunately for Eleanor's peace of mind, Miss Owen was handsome, clever, and agreeable, and, moreover, a perfect mistress of the English language. Her mother was, in fact, an Englishwoman, who, entertaining some prejudices in favour of her native tongue, had sent her daughter to a school in Chester, from which place she had proceeded on a visit to a sister of her mother's, residing in London, under whose care she had remained for upwards of a year ; she had but recently returned to Anglesea and rural life, and, consequently, could converse fluently on

many subjects that were quite a dead letter to poor little Wenefrede.

Herbert offered his hand to Miss Owen, to assist her in scrambling down the rugged rocks to the spot at which they were to embark, and by so doing shot a poisoned arrow into the heart of Wenefrede ; who, too simple to conceal the bitterness of her feelings under an assumed fit of gaiety, walked silently and sadly by the side of one of the young Owens, who had begged to be allowed the pleasure of conducting her down the somewhat perilous descent. Vainly did he try to draw even a monosyllabic reply in answer to the many observations he addressed to her ; and at length, he soothed his wounded self-love, by muttering in a voice so low, that no ear but his own heard the remark :—

“Confound the girl, how proud and stupid she is grown ! I wish I had left her to take care of herself.”

The great attention paid by Gladstone to Miss Owen, and the change in his manners to

Wenefrede, had been remarked quite as quickly by Howel as by Eleanor, and felt quite as keenly, though from a widely different cause.

Eleanor dreaded Wenefrede's losing her chance of becoming a baroness; Howel dreaded her losing her peace of mind; and as Herbert passed him, conversing in his most captivating manner, all smiles and complacency, with Miss Owen by his side, he felt a strong inclination to send him headlong down the rock; but most fortunately, the idea that it would not be exactly agreeable to be hung for the murder of your particular friend crossed his mind, and restrained his arm. But it did not restrain his tongue, and he appeared to have declared with Catherine in the Taming of the Shrew, "I will be free, even to the utmost, in words." These words were addressed to Eva, who very judiciously allowed him to abuse her cousin to his heart's content; and when "the force of language could no further go," and he began

to feel ashamed of the vehement expressions he had allowed himself to indulge in, Eva introduced a "word in season." In a very short time his temper was restored to its usual calm and happy state, and he began to think that Herbert was not a monster, but a frail human being; when Eleanor, who had declined all offers of assistance, and had followed unobserved close behind Howel and Eva, advanced to the side of the former—although the ridge of the rock over which they were clambering at this instant was so narrow that two persons could with difficulty proceed along it, and Eleanor whilst speaking to her brother was obliged to stand on a piece of the rock that hung over the sea, and on which few human feet would have dared to seek a footing—

"Stop!" she exclaimed, in a tone of authority; but perceiving that she was not likely to be obeyed, she seized hold of her brother's arm, and again, in a still more authoritative voice, exclaimed, "Stop!"

Howel, fearing that if he did not obey the order of his imperious sister, she might exercise less forbearance than he had done, and send him or Eva down the precipitous rock, deemed it best to obey. Eleanor then in a low tone of voice said, "Sir, I have heard all your high-sounding words, and what have they ended in? I no longer acknowledge you for a brother. No, I blush for you—for my father. Can you be the son of a Llewelyn, and yet allow a stranger to insult us? Yes, to treat us as if we were the dust beneath his feet, and only fit to be shaken off with ignominy. If you have one drop of the noble blood of your ancestors in your veins, you will call upon him to draw that sword which has so long hung idly by his side, and bid him fight for his worthless life."

"And if I should kill him, Eleanor," said Howel, who was now perfectly calm, "what will become of poor Wenefrede? Why she would die of a broken heart."

"Better, a thousand times better, would it

be to see her in her grave," exclaimed Eleanor, fiercely, "than that she should live to be pointed at as the poor Welsh maiden who had been forsaken by the son of a proud English lord."

The dangerous spot on which Eleanor stood, and the wild energy of her manner, attracted the notice of young Owen, who remarked it to Wenefrede. She turned suddenly round to look in the direction in which he pointed, her foot slipped over the side of the rock, and before even an exclamation of horror had been uttered, she had sunk beneath the waves. Screams of agony now burst from the bewildered and terrified group, and echoed fearfully along the rocks. Herbert sprung from a projecting point into the sea, and ere Howel or any of the party had reached the shore, he had rescued Wenefrede from a watery grave.

It was quickly ascertained that she had received no injury to her person, but had escaped with a tremendous fright, and a com-

plete wetting; and in a few seconds she was able to open her eyes and smile sweetly, as in duty bound, on her handsome but dripping-wet preserver, who hung over her with such speechless looks of love and happiness, that even Eleanor felt satisfied that his heart was still in her sister's possession; and when Howel whispered in her ear,—“I think I may venture to let my particular friend live a little longer;” she said “Yes,” and smiled most graciously.

Herbert at length condescended to listen to those around him, and to recollect that he and Wenefrede had not a dry thread about them; and that if they were not destined to be drowned, they might, nevertheless, be carried off by a cold or fever; and he acquiesced in the propriety of instantly sailing back to Holyhead and procuring dry garments. A fall from a rock into the sea, was unquestionably a novel mode of restoring good humour amongst a somewhat quarrelsome party; but it answered admirably on this occasion, and mirth and

tranquillity reigned during the sail to Holyhead.

It was now tacitly understood, that no young lady had either right or title to allege in favour of a flirtation with Herbert, save and except Wenefrede; and Miss Owen, with a provoking smile, seated herself as far from him as the size of the boat would allow of her going, and carried on a lively conversation with Howel; who was never better pleased than when he had an opportunity of showing his excellent tact and cleverness, by flirting with two or three young ladies at the same time, and leaving them all under the same pleasing delusion, that, next to Eva Wynn, they ranked as the most agreeable persons of his acquaintance.

"I think," said Eva, who had been busily engaged in wrapping Wenefrede up in a large boat-cloak, "that you must be intended to figure as a heroine, for no ordinary being would look as blooming as you do after having been half drowned."

"Wenefrede possesses an indispensable requisite in a heroine," said Miss Owen, "her hair curls naturally, and consequently she looks as well at this instant, as she would do on entering a ball-room after her hair had been dressed by the first coiffeur of the day." Herbert whispered something to Wenefrede about a lock of her glossy hair; but it is to be presumed that she did not hear what he said, for she did not answer him, and fixed her eyes very earnestly on the bottom of the boat. Herbert's attention was suddenly attracted from Wenefrede, by what appeared to him the perilous situation of two men who were searching for eggs amidst fearful and precipitous rocks, with no other protection than that afforded by a rope which was fastened round their bodies, and secured to a strong stake driven into the rock above them.

This "dreadful trade" Howel and the young Owens assured Herbert was carried on by those accustomed to it from their infancy, not only with indifference but with a wild feeling of

pleasure; and that very young children might often be seen crawling to the edge of the most stupendous and perpendicular of the rocks, looking down with the most perfect indifference, and watching the proceedings of their fathers or brothers, who were engaged in collecting birds or eggs, on narrow ledges, fathoms below them. Hairbreadth escapes, they told him, were of frequent occurrence; fatal accidents extremely rare; that, in their boyhood days, robbing the nest of a gull, or guillemot, had been a very favourite amusement; and that the higher and more dangerous rocks were always fixed upon for the scene of action, as it was supposed that, as the danger increased, so likewise did the excitement.

"What say you," asked Howel, "to our voting ourselves boys once more, and having a little sport amongst these rocks to-morrow?"

"Agreed! agreed!" cried the young Owens.

When Wenefrede's marine adventure was broken gently to Mrs. Llewelyn, she attempted to scold her for being so awkward and careless;

but she could not proceed with her maternal lecture, and turning to Herbert, she sobbed forth her gratitude to him for having saved the life of her child, perhaps at the risk of his own.

Now, though Wenefrede had escaped from drowning it seemed extremely probable that she would be quacked to death before night; for every person in the house possessed an infallible remedy for a cold; and all were equally determined that Wenefrede had caught cold, and that his or her recipe should be tried first. The poor girl, in spite of all her remonstrances against the measure, was ordered to her bed by Mrs. Llewelyn, and condemned, though in high health and spirits, to remain there for the rest of the day. The same precautionary measure was strongly recommended to Herbert; but he only laughed at his kind counsellors, and had even the audacity to hint his want of faith in water posset and water gruel, as cures for a cold. Several gentlemen who had passed the night at Mr. Owen's were

now preparing to take their departure, and Herbert was invited to join them in a parting cup of ale: not in the hall, or the parlour, or even in the kitchen, but in the cellar!

"Come along, my good fellow," said Mr. Llewelyn; "and, take my word for it, you will find half a cup of Owen's fine old ale a better remedy for a cold than all the wish-a-washy stuff the women have been trying to pour down your throat. I like you better than ever for hating medicine. I hate it as much as they say the Evil One does holywater. Never took a drop in my life that I can recollect; and hang me, if I thought the women would not find me out and kick up a confounded piece of work about it, I'd carry up a cup of ale posset to my poor little Wenefrede.

Herbert followed Mr. Llewelyn down the broad steps that led to the cellar; and having adopted that most excellent travelling maxim, of, when you are at Rome, doing as they do at Rome, he made no remarks on the singularity of the spot fixed upon for a farewell scene.

Enormous barrels, the smallest of which contained a hogshead, stood in most imposing piles of three deep, each line containing eight barrels; but the eight placed against the wall were evidently most worthy of notice; for on each was written, in gigantic white letters, a name famous in British history. Owen Tudor stood side by side of Catherine his wife; then followed the five royal tribes; and the rotund group was flanked by a Henry VIII., which offered no unapt representation of the figure of its namesake.

Herbert speedily discovered that all the party present were on most intimate terms with the royal personages in whose presence they were standing—not with cap, but *cup*, in hand; that, like true and loyal subjects, they never allowed an opportunity of paying their homage to them to pass by unregarded; and consequently that they were, one and all, able to give a most critical and minute account of all the good or bad qualities they possessed: the latter were hinted at in a whisper.

One gentleman, with a low bow, requested to be allowed the honour of quaffing a cup of ale with "Bluff King Hal," whilst another declared that he only paid homage to a native of the soil, and proffered his cup to Gryffith Ap Cynan. Each barrel had its history, and of course Herbert, as the stranger of the party, was condemned to listen to it; and then he was requested to name the monarch whose ale he should best like to taste.

"Indeed, my good sir," said Herbert, laughing, and addressing himself to Mr. Owen, "your monarchs rejoiced in such unpronounceable names, that if I attempted to utter them I should only excite your mirth; I shall therefore feel much obliged by your ordering your butler to make me acquainted with the most famous king of the barrel amongst them."

A cup was instantly filled "of jolly good ale and old," and offered to Herbert; but just as he was raising it to his lips, Old Evan (who never declined an invitation to a cellar,

even when it contained less tempting liquor than did the one at Llancarnedd) touched his elbow, and whispered in his ear,—

“Him better no drink all that ale, it little think how old and strong him be. No head possib’ stand that big cup ale, unless inteet it be Welshman’s.”

Herbert drew back, under pretence of bowing low to the monarch of the unpronounceable name to whom he was indebted for his cup of ale, and hardly allowing himself to taste the mild insinuating liquor, he dexterously presented the cup to old Evan, who emptied it at a draught, and then carefully placed it in a recess in the wall, that it might be easily found should he feel inclined to renew his acquaintance with any of the barrels before he quitted the cellar.

Mr. Llewelyn asked Herbert if he could guess the age of the ale he had been drinking; but he was much too wary a soldier to offer even a conjecture on the subject.

“It was brewed at the time of my wedding,”

observed Mr. Owen; "and that event took place one-and-twenty years ago. But if you are partial to very old ale, let Catherine Tudor send you a cup. It is not quite the thing, perhaps, to expose a lady's age at any time, but more particularly when she happens, as in the present case, to be two or three years older than her husband."

Herbert declined becoming more intimately acquainted with the flavour of the widowed queen's ale.

"Oh!" exclaimed Mr. Owen, with a sigh; "my poor father died a young man, and he only lived long enough to see these barrels filled once; but my grandfather was a very fortunate man, for I have often heard that he saw them twice filled and emptied, and that all that remained of a third brewing at the time of his death was drunk to the last drop, at the funeral."

After the departing guests had swallowed as much ale as would, in Herbert's opinion, have rendered a bed a much more fitting

place for them than a saddle, they called for their horses, mounted them, and set off apparently as little affected by it as they would have been had they taken as many cups of water.

Though few of the party had closed their eyes on the previous night, yet they most probably intended proceeding to the house of some mutual friend, and finishing the day as they had commenced it—with ale, that notwithstanding, as the night advanced, would cause them to “nod and wink,” but would fail in sending them either under the table, or into their beds. At this period drinking bouts that lasted for several days were of frequent occurrence; but they were much oftener held at a neighbouring ale-house (at which the landlady was a celebrated brewer) than at the family mansion. Two laws were invariably promulgated at these bacchanals, and quite as inviolably observed as if they had been a part of the laws of the land. The first law forbade any member of the society

to quit the house till the barrel of ale and all the provisions in the house were exhausted. The second law forbade any member to lie down on a bed, even should the barrel hold out for a week; but if sleep he must, that he should stretch "his lubber length" upon the floor of their sitting-room.

But the reign of Sir John Barleycorn is ended: his lords in waiting, the knights of his table, nay, the very grooms of his stall, have vanished. The rising generation will listen to an account of the exploits of their great grandfathers at one of their convivial meetings, as an unnatural and improbable fiction; little dreaming that, could their ancestors have taken a peep into futurity, they would, had it been in their power, have disinherited any grandson of theirs, who in times to come should prove himself so degenerate a Briton as to become a member of a teetotal society; and that curses loud and long would have fallen upon the head of the zealous wight who should so far disgrace his name

and country as to step forward and harangue a large assembly on the vices of ale, and the virtues of tea, coffee, and the pure element—with a flag waving over his head, gaily adorned with a gigantic male figure holding a Brobdignag tea-cup in his hand, and with "Temperance" written in letters of gold around his head.

CHAPTER VII.

"Lord, lord! methought what pain it was to drown
What dreadful noise of waters in my ears!
What sights of ugly death within mine eyes!"

RICHARD III.

A LOVELY morning tempted the young ladies at Llancarnedd to accompany the young men as far as Holyhead, on their way to the rocks on which they had determined to seek for birds and eggs.

When the party reached Holyhead, the sea wore so calm and sunny an appearance, that very little persuasion was necessary to induce the "girls," as young Owen most irreverently styled them, to step into a boat, and sail towards the small bay already spoken of, in order that they might watch the proceedings

of the hardy adventurers. The enthusiasm with which the young men spoke of the sport they were about to engage in, tempted Herbert away from Wenefrede, and he accompanied them to the rocks. For some time he only acted the part of the stake, to which the fowlers, when not accompanied by a companion, are in the habit of fastening their ropes : which are formed of hide, and are often forty fathoms in length. Howel presented him with the middle of his rope, and descended a rock of fearful height without one misgiving that Herbert's "brain might turn, and the deficient sight topple him down headlong," and hurry them both to certain death.

Few save a St. Hildar's man would have ventured upon exploits, not only so frightful to behold, but which were accompanied with such imminent danger, as those that Howel and several of his companions wantonly indulged in on the present occasion.

At length, Howel having played "fantastic tricks" till he was weary of them, and listened

to the screams of cormorants, gulls, razor-bills, and guillemots, till he thought deafness must be a blessing, reascended his rope, and stood by Herbert's side on the rock.

The rest of the party had wandered to a considerable distance. Herbert had grown tired of his inactive employment, and of his own company, and declared that he would not remain a spectator any longer, but try his fortune amongst the gulls and guillemots. Vainly did Howel point out the danger attending this scheme: the more he urged against it the more determined Herbert became to carry it into effect, and at last he obtained a reluctant consent to his risking his neck in Howel's company.

As there was no one at hand to hold the rope, Howel made it fast to a stake, and then, with a composure and indifference astonishing to behold, he proceeded to slide down the rope, conversing gaily as he went. But he was obliged to rest satisfied with laconic and somewhat mal-apropos answers from his com-

panion ; who had discovered, when too late, all the horrors of being suspended between sky and water, with no rest for the sole of his foot ; and with a secret dread of becoming food for fishes. He hugged with the fondest affection the rope to which he clung ; but Howel, feeling far from comfortable about his fool-hardy friend, soon landed him on a tolerably broad ledge of a rock. Herbert looked at the heaven above his head, and the sea beneath his feet, and then breathed a secret prayer for safe deliverance from a situation that appeared to him one of great danger ; but unwilling to admit Howel into his confidence on the subject, he assumed a lively manner and tone of voice, and exclaimed, with a laugh that sounded anything but jocose, as echo repeated it from rock to rock, " If I am lucky enough to reach good mother earth again in safety, confound me if I do not promise her to be a good boy for the future, and never willingly to play the truant from her domains again."

Howel quickly perceived that his companion

was but an indifferent cragsman, and soon proposed to him to return to the top of the rock,—a proposal that was accepted almost before it was made. Howell having exhausted the stock of eggs on the broad ledge on which they were standing, lowered himself down to a spot on which he could with difficulty obtain a footing; he then hallooed to Herbert, and bade him make the best of his way to *terra firma*. This he instantly prepared to do; but before he had ascended a fathom, on casting his eyes upwards, he exclaimed in a voice of horror—

“The rope, the rope! for God’s sake follow me, Howel, or you are a dead man—the rope, oh, the rope! the edge of the rock has nearly cut it in two!”

“Think not of me,” shouted Howel, “the rope can only support your weight. Stop not an instant: you may yet save your own life; leave me to my fate.”

“Never, never!” cried Herbert, in a tone of agony.

Howel spoke not, but drawing a knife from

his girdle, cut the rope that was attached to his waist; and then, in a voice that was distinctly heard above the roar of the waves of the sea, which were rolling into the cave below, cried,—

“Look not behind you! stop not an instant—Climb for your life! Think of your mother—think of——”

Howel could not finish the sentence; for the recollection that he too had a mother, for the instant stopped his breath, and served to unman him. But in a few seconds a loud shout that reverberated along the rocks assured him of the safety of his friend. Even at that instant, when a horrid death appeared to be hanging over him, it shot a feeling of joy through his heart; for cruelly, during the brief time allowed him for thought, had he reproached himself for allowing Herbert to accompany him on an expedition so fraught with danger: with bitterness of spirit he had exclaimed, “his blood is on my head.” But Herbert was in a place of safety; and a heavy weight was thereby removed from

Howel's conscience: his thoughts were now turned to the perils of his own situation. Death to one less accustomed to scenes of danger would have appeared inevitable. The rope by which he had descended was useless; the party most interested in his safety was far away; and Herbert, unaccustomed to act on such perilous occasions, even should he be so fortunate as to procure assistants would—not only from his inability to direct them, but his want of knowledge of the language of the country—be little able to give him the prompt assistance that his case required.

The ledge of rock on which he stood was so narrow that, but for the support he derived from a projecting crag, to which he clung, he could not have found sufficient space on which to balance his body. His situation was indeed sufficiently appalling to make the blood run cold in the bravest heart; but when it was observed by the party who were sailing in the boat at a short distance from the spot, it appeared to have acquired even greater horrors; and Wene-

frede, after gazing for an instant on her brother's perilous situation, uttered a long wild scream, and fell senseless at the bottom of the boat. Eva neither screamed nor fainted, but her silent agony was dreadful to behold: she stood upright in the boat, her eyes fixed on the rock to which Howel was clinging; her cheeks and lips colourless as those of a marble statue—for which she might have been mistaken but for the violent workings of the muscles of her throat, and the swelling of the veins in her forehead, till at length they looked like small blue cords.

A deep-drawn sigh at last burst from her, which seemed as if it saved her heart from breaking. With a violent effort, and in a deep hollow tone, she exclaimed,—

“Row! row! row to the mouth of the cave! He may yet be saved—he may jump into the boat. Row! row! Oh, why do not you row?” she inquired in an almost frantic tone. “If you will not row, I will,” and she tried to seize an oar from one of the boatmen, again

exclaiming, "row! row! it is the only chance of saving his life!"

The boatmen were pulling towards the spot pointed out by Eva, when Eleanor, whose face was nearly as white as Eva's, interfered.

"Row not to the mouth of the cave," she said, in a voice of authority, "for the chances are that Howel jumping into the boat may upset it, and we shall all go to the bottom: no, I command you to put back—better one should die than all of us run the risk of drowning."

But the boatmen, regardless of her orders, continued to row nearer to the cave: the wild energy of Eva's manner working more forcibly on their feelings than did the dread of Eleanor's displeasure. The boat touched the side of the cave above which Howel stood.

"There was silence still as death,
And the boldest held their breath for a time."

Several moments of agony to all present passed; and Howel was still seen clinging to

the rock. Eva, with her hands forcibly clasped together, had sunk on her seat in silent despair.

"Oh! he does not see the boat, or surely he would try to jump into her!" exclaimed several voices.

"He knows the danger of swamping her, I take it," said one of the sailors.

"And he would rather drop from that rock into a watery grave than expose us to the least danger," sobbed forth Miss Owen.

A few more minutes of anxiety, "too deep for tears," followed; and when even the most sanguine began to relinquish all hope, a form, which, from its amazing height above them, appeared almost too small to be that of a human being, was seen rapidly descending by what they imagined to be a rope. At length man and rope became distinctly visible; and in a very short time the former was seen hanging close to the rocks, to the projecting part of which Howel was clinging.

But we must leave the party in the boat in

a state of hysterical joy, to explain the history of aid so unhopcd for reaching Howel.

Herbert, on gaining the top of the rock, had called loudly, and almost distractedly, for assistance, though with little or no hope of its arriving; and when a voice answered the cry, he hardly dared "lay the flattering unction to his soul" that it was aught but an echo mocking his scream of agony. Never had he experienced joy similar to that which filled his heart when he saw a human figure, though at a considerable distance from the spot on which he stood, evidently advancing towards him. He ran forward to meet him, and as he drew near, to render his happiness complete, he discovered that the stranger held a fowler's rope in his hand, and was one of the many visitors who had supped with him at Llancarnedd on the preceding evening. In breathless haste he informed Herbert that he had been prevented accompanying the party to the rocks, as he had engaged to do, by business at home; and that he had feared that all

the sport would have been over before he could find time to join them.

Howel's state of peril was comprehended before Herbert had found breath sufficient to utter half a distinct sentence to the stranger. The rope was fixed to the stake, and he had glided down it to the lower ridge on which Howel was attempting in vain to find a steady footing.

What feelings of joy at beholding succour so unexpected, so un hoped for, must have filled the heart of Howel ! But the over-powering sensation of gratitude with which he gazed at the rope that was to save him from impending destruction, can only be properly understood by those who have felt that there was no hope of life for them. The rope was thrown over the projecting point of the rock to Howel ; he sprang forward, tightly grasped it in his hands, and in a few seconds was standing by the side of the pale and trembling Herbert.

Poor Eva now experienced how much more

difficult it is to bear unhopèd-for happiness than misery. The transition was too sudden, and she fainted. Eleanor sprang forward and caught her in her arms. Her cold, unsympathizing manner disappeared; and she, at least for the moment, was anxious to administer comfort: proving the truth of the poet's remark, "that none are all evil." In fact, little sympathy as she generally felt for the joys or sorrows of her acquaintance, her heart had been touched on the present occasion by the speechless agony of Eva.

Howel once safely landed on the rock, the party in the boat unanimously agreed that they would put back to Holyhead, and there await the return of the rest of the party.

Eva at length recovered from her fainting fit; though long after her eyes were opened, she continued to gaze around her with a lack-lustre expression in them that quite alarmed those who beheld it. But all at once she appeared to be restored to a perfect consciousness of all that had occurred; and, hiding her face in

her pocket-handkerchief, she burst into tears. —We left poor Wenefrede in an insensible state at the bottom of the boat, some pages back; and as we could not, without making an awkward pause in our narrative, just at that time stop to bring her back to life, we think it only a piece of proper attention to so good and fair a young lady to state, (now that we have "ample room and verge enough" to do so), that she soon recovered. She was spared the misery of seeing her brother's hairbreadth escape of "sinking into the depths with bubbling groan," and consequently was in a much less excited state than Eva.

Of all the party, Eleanor and Eva alone were silent during the row back to Holyhead. All appeared anxious to talk, and none to listen.

Herbert and all the cragsmen were in attendance to receive and welcome the party in the boat; and Howel's shoulders were nearly dislocated by the numerous shakes of the hand that he was obliged to undergo;

whilst congratulations, most sincere and noisy, at his late happy escape, were to be heard on every side. Herbert's cheeks were flushed, and his manner hurried; and the tears started into his eyes when he silently but fervently pressed the hand of his friend. He then turned to Wenefrede, and said in a low voice,—

“I am quite sure Mrs. Llewelyn will never forgive me. I might have been the cause of your brother's death. It was my obstinacy—it was my folly that occasioned all the mischief.”

“But,” exclaimed Wenefrede, eagerly, “Howel is not only alive, but quite as well as if nothing had happened to him. I never saw him looking better. Did you? Oh! I am quite sure my mother will not throw the least blame upon you! Why should she, indeed? I think, if blame attaches to any one, that it is to Howel. He certainly ought to have told you the story of the man and his two sons, who went down the same rope, and lost their lives in consequence of the rope

being cut by the rock, and dropping them into the sea. No, indeed! I am quite certain that neither my mother nor any one else will attribute the least blame to you. Oh, no! I am——”

“And I am quite convinced,” said Herbert, interrupting her with a smile, “that no person on earth will convince Mrs. Llewelyn that her son could be to blame; so ‘I must screw my courage to the sticking place’ to encounter her anger.”

“I never saw my mother really angry in my life,” said Wenefrede; “and I am quite certain that she will not fix upon you as the first victim to her wrath, for you are a very great favourite of hers.”

“I must trust my cause in your hands, and hope that you will exert all your eloquence in my favour,” said Herbert, pressing the little dimpled hand, that, in her extreme earnestness to quiet his alarms, Wenefrede had laid on his arm. The hand was instantly withdrawn, but that gentle squeeze and the look by which it

was accompanied, were remembered when he who gave it was far, far away.

Few who had not witnessed it could have credited how pale Mr. Llewelyn's rubicund face became, when he was informed of the imminent danger to which the life of his son had been exposed; he sank down on a chair, and appeared as if gasping for breath. At length he exclaimed "Thank God! thank God!" and a tear was seen stealing slowly over his cheek; but he was no sooner aware of the circumstance than he dashed it away, muttering at the same time,—

"Pooh! pooh! why, I verily believe I am growing quite an old woman!"

"You had better take something, sir," said Mrs. Owen, in a compassionate tone of voice; "a little red lavender, a little essence of——"

"Essence of nonsense!" cried Mr. Owen. "No, no; a glass of ale say I; and you know, my dear," turning towards his wife, "that you say I am a most capital doctor."

"Oh, no; pray, pray do not send for any ale for me," said Mr. Llewelyn, shaking his head;

"I assure you I do not require it, I am much better without it."

But the perverse ale did come, and looked so inviting that, although Mr. Llewelyn waived it from him, and shook his head at it several times, at last he held out his hand, and swallowed a very consoling draught from the family tankard, and "Richard was himself again."

The effect produced on Mrs. Llewelyn by the narrow escape of her son, which had so quickly followed that of her equally beloved daughter, was of a more lasting nature; and it was observed, that "she never smiled again," during the rest of the day: that her eyes constantly rested on the countenance of Howel or Wenefrede, and that they frequently filled with tears. Her son, with his usual attention to her feelings, declined entering into any of the amusements proposed by the young Owens and their companions to kill time between the hours of dinner and supper; and he sat down by Eva's side, in the long, low, wainscoted parlour,

with a book in his hand, and read aloud to the party of ladies assembled there, all occupied with embroidery-frames and spinning-wheels, or in working stitches on Indian muslin, that in days to come would excite the wonder and admiration of their grandchildren or grand-nieces. Mr. Owen—who appeared on all occasions most anxious to emulate his grandfather, who had been even more celebrated for his ale than his grandmother had been for working lace patterns on Indian muslin—never allowed an opportunity of emptying the barrels in his cellar to pass unregarded, and he made Howel's narrow escape from drowning in the morning, an excuse for many an extra glass of ale at supper. Nor was the liberality of the worthy squire confined to the high table: enormous black jugs filled with ale contributed by Henry the VIII, were placed on the side table; and although it was exactly the sort of ale described in the old song as likely to “make a cat speak, and a man dumb,” yet it had a precisely contrary effect on a remarkably taciturn plough-

man, for he grew quite loquacious, and at length declared, with an oath, "that he should not be sorry if a friend of his master's was all but drowned every day in the year!"

After supper, dancing commenced; and that was followed by singing stanzas to the harp, as we have elsewhere described. On the present occasion, Howel was made the hero of the evening; and great was Herbert's surprise, when Wenefrede translated for his benefit several beautiful stanzas sung by the harper and other members of the party, to find that they all bore some allusion to the events of the morning, and that these unpremeditated stanzas formed a poem of considerable poetical merit and pathos.

Now, though Eva Wynn shared the happy fate of the celebrated Duchess of Gordon, and lived before nerves were in fashion, still the trying events of the morning had agitated her most powerfully. She was attacked with a throbbing headache; and when, at a hint given by Mrs. Owen, the harper suddenly

commenced playing a plaintive air, and words that assumed the shape of a farewell to Howel on his approaching departure for the seat of war, were sung to it, she felt quite overpowered and ill, and hastily retreated to an apartment she would gladly, that evening at least, have claimed for her own. But it was a long room, running the entire length of the house, on the second story, and bore the ominous title of the Barrack room.

The total absence of all comfort conveyed by that name, let no one imagine that they can comprehend in all its bearings, unless they have visited a female friend "who lived in country quarters." The barrack room at Llancarnedd contained two large and two small beds, and, on the present occasion, they were all occupied at night; but on entering it, Eva, to her unutterable joy, found it empty, and she threw herself into an arm chair, and wept like an infant. These were almost the first tears she had shed during the day; and she appeared to be more keenly alive to the

full extent of the misery she had escaped, and of the happiness for which she had cause to lift up her prayers in grateful thankfulness, now that tears were rolling rapidly down her cheeks, and sobs, long and deep, were bursting from her heart, than when Howel had stood before her in the boat like one risen from the dead, and neither tears nor words were granted to her to express the various contending emotions that were struggling in her heart.

But her indulgence in the "pensive pleasure" of tears and sighs was but of short duration. Her absence from the hall had excited attention, and several of the young ladies instantly, with "cruel kindness," ran up stairs to see what could possibly be the matter with "dear Eva Wynn." "Dear Eva" pleaded a very bad headache as an excuse for her abrupt departure from the hall; and, declaring that she felt totally unfit for company, began to prepare for retiring for the night. But her friends did not take the

hint; indeed, they evidently thought that if it was not good for man to be alone, neither was it for woman; and, in spite of all the civil hints Eva gave them to depart and leave her in peace, they insisted upon remaining with her and seeing her comfortably settled in her bed, and her poor aching head resting on a pillow.

Many were the injunctions laid upon her not to talk—talking was bad for her head—they would talk for her; and so they did, till some of Eva's countrywomen would have wished the whole party at the bottom of the sea; but she contented herself with wishing them all safe back in the hall. They remained talking and condoling with her till they might all of them, in the present age, have been taken up under Mr. Martin's act for cruelty to dumb creatures; for Eva, to drown if possible the sound of their voices, which jarred fearfully on every nerve in her head, had buried it in a soft down pillow, and, without uttering a word, pressed it to her

ears. But it was of no avail: the sound of merry voices, trying to speak pathetically, made their way through the down pillow; and, as it was a very sultry night in July, a sense of suffocation was added to her other torments.

On the following morning, the Llewelyns and their friends prepared for their journey back to the Glyn; but violent and loud opposition was offered to their leaving Llancar-nedd, by Mr. Owen, Mrs. Owen, and the Misses and Masters Owen. But at length Mr. Llewelyn brought forward such unanswerable proofs that his presence was absolutely necessary at the hall that afternoon, not only on account of his own affairs, but of those of his neighbours, that he silenced the importunities of his kind friends. In truth, Mr. Llewelyn was not only "justice of peace and *coram*," but administrator of law, gratis, to all who chose to consult him; and, consequently, during his life no lawyer, however cunning, could contrive to pick up a liveli-

hood either at Bangor or Conway. Even after he was gathered to his forefathers, it was with fearful misgivings that a venturesome lawyer established himself at the latter town; greatly fearing that his countrymen would be quite as inexorable towards him as was Henry IV. to Mortimer, and say, "On the barren mountains let him starve," rather than that we should be condemned to see him with the fruits of our valley.

Mr. Owen continued to utter an occasional grumble at the confoundedly short visit his friends had paid him, till their horses arrived at the door of the hall. Henry VIII. contributed stirrup-cups in a style of munificence well suited to royalty, the usual dislocating shake of the hand was given, and the party were mounted and homeward bound before the old clock in the hall had struck nine. Probably the early rising, the being as constantly in the saddle as any border marauder, and the hard exercise taken by the iron race of gentlemen of this period, may account for the little effect pro-

duced on their constitutions by the (to us) incredible quantity of ale swallowed by them daily.

END OF VOLUME I.

LLEWELYN'S HEIR;

OR,

NORTH WALES.



LLEWELYN'S HEIR;

OR,

NORTH WALES:

ITS MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND SUPERSTITIONS,

DURING THE LAST CENTURY.

ILLUSTRATED BY

A Story Founded on Fact.

~~~~~  
" I shall despair: there is no creature loves me:

And if I die, no soul will pity me."

RICHARD III.

~~~~~  
IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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LLEWELYN'S HEIR.

CHAPTER I.

Tell me not, love, I am unkind ;—
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast, and quiet mind,
To war and arms I fly.
True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field ;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

ON the arrival of the party at Glyn Llewelyn, it might have been imagined that they had been absent for three months, instead of three days ; for grey-headed servants came forth to meet them grinning with delight, accompanied by dogs as venerable looking as themselves :

the dogs advanced with a sober pace, wagging their tails at a rate more in unison with their joy than their steps, whilst around them frisked and gamboled, grand-children, nay great grand-children, who testified their pleasure at their master's safe return, by barking noisily. Old Roderic played his blithest air, and an unusual appearance of bustle seemed to pervade the whole house, while exclamations of delight at the return of their master and mistress, might be heard from every quarter.

But, alas! Mrs. Llewelyn was soon heard to complain that her domestic affairs had not gone on in the same even tenor as when she was at home; for a sad thief of a greyhound had run off that morning with a remarkably fine forequarter of kid, and a luxurious cat had nearly drowned herself, not in ale, but in new milk. Nor did Mr. Llewelyn's countenance denote that "all was peace within;" and he was soon heard to indulge himself in sundry very unquakerly observations, in which he denounced vengeance against groom, huntsman,

and gardener, for some dereliction from their respective duties during his absence ; and then turning to Gladstone, he exclaimed with an oath, which we will not shock "ears polite" by writing down, "that everything went to rack and ruin did he but turn his back for a few hours."

But this tempest of words, though most awful and violent, was but of short duration, and appeared to be but little heeded by those to whom it was addressed ; indeed Griffith Lloyd, the old gardener, was in the habit of saying, that he liked to see his master in a passion, for as soon as it was over he was sure to say,

"You confounded old fool, mind your business better next time ; and now go to the hall and say I sent you for a horn of ale."

"What has occurred in the garden since we left, to vex Mr. Llewelyn, Griffith Lloyd ?" asked Eva, who was examining a flower bed that the old man was busily engaged in disfiguring with one of his favourite nondescript animals ; "has one of the box peacocks lost

his tail during our absence, or the worthy old lady in the arm-chair dropped one of her knitting needles?"

Now Griffith Lloyd had been educated by a gardener at Chester, and he was not a little vain of being able to speak English, as well, he was pleased to say and think, as if he had been born and bred an Englishman. Eva, who was well aware of this weak point in his character, always spoke to him in English, and he invariably answered in the same language: how correctly he spoke it the following dialogue will show.

"Well now, indeet, Got bless it, not bat as that. No possib him look it master in him face if it peacock lost tail; but bat ting happen, very bat, Miss Eva: great bast goot, curse he! got in and eat up best sweet Maria bush."

"Sweet Maria bush, Griffith Lloyd," observed Eva, with difficulty suppressing a smile, "that is a shrub I never heard of before; has the goat eaten it all up, or can you shew me a piece?"

"That she yander, Miss," said old Griffith, pointing to the stump of a sweet briar bush.

"Oh yes, I see it," replied Eva: "of course you call it by its English name. What thorns it has! It must have pricked the poor goat's mouth sadly."

"Curse he once more, nasty ugly old bast! Glad very him prick it mouth: teach him not meddle sweet Maria upon twice. Man alive! but look, Miss Eva, if him ha'nt bit bit out privat hedge."

This was another of his English words that required to be interpreted, and which he it known signified privet.

"Well indeet," suddenly exclaimed the old man, "it lose its memory: him near forget horn ale master promise he."

"But Griffith Lloyd," said Eva, "before you go, you must promise to come over the mountain soon to Plas Conway, to tell me the English names for all the flowers in my garden. You shall have a good dinner, a kind welcome, and as much ale as will be good for you; but

I am afraid that you will have a great deal of trouble to teach me to pronounce the names properly. I find——”

“Got bless it, never mind, Miss,” replied the old gardener with a most patronising grin, “their a’nt a many that knows all about flowers as him does, or that calls um by thens right names : no indeet, though poor peoples, it may have had the luck to see a garden in Chester upon twice or more. But goot by, Miss, and Got bless it, for a goot kint young ladies.”

And so saying, Griffith Lloyd hobbled off to boast to the huntsman and head groom that clever as Miss Wynn was known to be, he was still cleverer. Eva returned to the hall, intending to amuse Howel with an account of her lecture on floral names delivered by Griffith Lloyd ; but she found him with a letter in his hand, and an expression of deep thought on his countenance, and she instantly discovered that it was not a proper moment to introduce a subject of so light a nature.

Howel, on perceiving Eva, went up to her, and taking her hand, said, in a voice husky from emotion,

"Eva, dear, dearest Eva, I—I—must leave you."

Eva trembled from head to foot; but she did not utter a word.

"Yes, my dear Eva," continued Howel, trying to speak in a cheerful tone, "I have at last received orders to join a detachment of my regiment that is to set off immediately to join the Duke of Marlborough on the Rhine. What say you, Eva? Should you like to be 'my lady'?—for I fully intend winning 'silver spurs' or a baronage."

"Return to us in safety, and we shall care little about anything else," exclaimed Eva, in a low tone: forgetting, at this instant, all the proud hopes that frequently filled her heart, of the future glory and fame that Howel was to gain by "seeking the bubble reputation e'en at the cannon's mouth."

"I cannot tell my poor mother the contents of this letter, Eva," said Howel.

"I will—I will," replied Eva; and she hurried away, glad of an excuse for leaving Howel before her feelings quite overpowered her.

When the contents of this letter were made generally known, a sudden and oppressive stillness appeared to pervade the house. Little was eaten, and less said, during dinner. When the silent meal was finished, old Roderic mechanically seated himself in his ancient high-backed chair, by the side of his harp, his hand resting on the strings; but he did not even make an effort to produce a strain to enliven the silent party at the high table. Mr. Llewelyn's good spirits appeared to have deserted him at the very instant that he stood most in need of them; and pressing the hand of Eva, who sat by his side, he exclaimed, in an agitated voice,

"Fool that I was to give my consent to my dear boy's leaving us. Yes, I not only gave

my consent, but was anxious that he should be a soldier. Fool! fool that I was! Oh, Eva, Eva! pride was at the bottom of my heart then. Don't you remember Eleanor's bringing down our pedigree, and our all pointing out to him how many of our name had been celebrated warriors; and how we laughed about his being created Lord Glyn Llewelyn? Oh! we little thought, then, of the pain it would give us to part with him. Oh! I was surrounded with blessings, and yet I was not satisfied. Pride whispered, 'make your son a soldier, that he may add to the fame of your house,' and I attended to that whisper, and determined to send from me my greatest blessing: my noble-hearted, affectionate boy."

Mr. Llewelyn grasped Eva's hand as he uttered this speech with almost a convulsive force; and Eva, forgetting her own sorrows, strove by words and looks of true affection to soften his. She at length succeeded in restoring him to an apparent state of calm-

ness ; and before she quitted his side she had the pleasure of hearing him propose " the healths of Master Gladstone and Howel, and a prosperous campaign to them," in his usual tone of hilarity.

Poor Mrs. Llewelyn, after having cried till her tears were exhausted, began to bustle about and give vague and contradictory orders respecting her son's luggage ; and the dread lest a set of shirts that were in hand should not be completed in time, served, at least for the moment, to divert her thoughts from the speedy departure of her son.

Wenefrede sat down to finish one of her brother's cravats, and stitched and cried till she heard the voices of the gentlemen in the inner hall ; she then hastily raised herself on tip-toe to catch a glimpse of her face in the ancient looking - glass that was " high up hung " against the wall ; but the momentary glance she obtained not impressing her with the idea that weeping had improved her beauty, she hastily retreated through a side

door: much to the surprise of Eleanor, who was seated at a piece of embroidery that had occupied her time for many a year.

If Eleanor felt any grief at the approaching departure of her only brother, it was denoted by no outward sign, except that her cheeks were a shade paler than usual. Howel, on entering the room, walked up to her, and with a look and tone of more brotherly affection than he was in the habit of addressing her with, said,

"Eleanor, I am on the eve of leaving my native land, perhaps for ever. Should I never return to my happy, happy home, try to comfort my poor father. And, oh! if she should survive him," he exclaimed, in a low, fervent tone, "as you hope for happiness in the world to come, shew kindness to my dear, dear mother."

If this address excited any emotion in the cold heart of Eleanor, its effect was studiously concealed in her answer; for withdrawing her hand from Howel's, she replied,

"That this life abounded sufficiently in troubles, and that she considered it the height of folly, to anticipate those that might never befall us." She then added with a smile, that was nearly allied to a sneer, "that she believed it was much more likely the time would come when she would require kindness from the hands of others, than that they should look for it from hers."

"I am quite at a loss to imagine to what period you allude," said Howel in a voice of astonishment.

Eleanor raised her head and replied,

"I refer to the time when your children may have become so numerous and so noisy, as to render the home of my childhood no fitting place for one of my orderly and retired habits." But she asked, "do not you think that gentle little Wenefrede will require kindness and attention, as well as the other members of the family, should you never return?"

"Unkindness would soon kill her, I am well aware, Eleanor; but I hope and trust that she

will, ere long, be married to my friend Gladstone, and will not stand in need of any other guide or protector. My prayer for her, is, that her future life may be as happy as it bids fair to be splendid."

"Heaven grant it!" exclaimed Eleanor in a voice of energetic earnestness, that proved her love for Wenefrede was great.

"Eleanor," said Howel, looking at her with a melancholy, but affectionate expression of countenance, "you can love fervently. Oh! why did I never make the discovery till this instant, when it is too late to be of any avail?—Why did I imagine you to be cold hearted and selfish, and in consequence feel little real affection for you? But believe me, my heart reproaches me bitterly at this instant, for having often treated you with neglect and unkindness. Eleanor, we are about to be parted for months—for years—perhaps for ever. Oh! say that you forgive me!"

Howel took her hand and pressed it affectionately. She did not withdraw it, nor

did she return the pressure ; and when Howel looked in her face he perceived that it was of an ashy paleness, and apprehended that she was going to faint. But although her colourless lips quivered fearfully, she mastered her emotion ; and hastily withdrawing her hand, and assuring Howel that she was well—perfectly well, with her usual stately step, walked out of the room ; and when she shortly afterwards joined the family at the supper-table, Howel, who watched her earnestly, failed in detecting the least shade of emotion in her countenance.

Of Eva's feelings during this melancholy evening, we have said nothing ; because we feel that we could not describe them naturally. There are few of our readers who have travelled even a short distance on the road of life, but can too well understand her grief of mind, on being called upon to part—if not for ever, at least for an unlimited period,—with the being that was nearest and dearest to her heart ; and they may but too faithfully picture to themselves the blank and

misery the future presented to Eva's view. She retired early to bed, but she could not sleep: vainly did she "invoke nature's soft nurse" "to weigh her eyelids down, and steep her senses in forgetfulness." She tried to pray; but her thoughts wandered. Yet although she could not pray for herself, she found that she could pray for Howel; and she gradually grew calm, and appeared just on the point of dropping asleep when a line of Shakspeare rushed into her mind—"I am undone! there is no living, none, if Bertram be away." Vainly did she strive to forget it; it quite haunted her. She repeated it again, and again; till at length body and mind seemed to be alike wearied, and she fell asleep. Still during her unrefreshing slumbers a voice appeared to sound in her ears—"I am undone! there is no living, none, if Bertram be away:" and she awoke repeating the line early in the morning.

With a heavy heart, and aching head, she proceeded to the hall; and found little to cheer her spirits in the countenances of the party

assembled round the breakfast table. Poor Mrs. Llewelyn had not passed more than two hours of the night in her bed : she could not sleep, and had become extremely uneasy lest some of her orders, issued on the preceding evening, had not been properly attended to. At last she quitted her bed, and passed the remainder of the night in making arrangements, which she flattered herself would contribute to the comfort of her son in a foreign land. But now that her maternal care could add nothing further to the list, she began to feel sensible of want of rest ; and sat at the head of the breakfast table looking fagged and woe begone. Next to her was seated Wenefrede, who held down her head to conceal the big tears, which, in spite of all her efforts to keep them back, would roll down her flushed cheeks. How many fell for Herbert Gladstone, who was to take his departnre on the same day as Howel, it would perhaps be alike invidious and useless to inquire.

Herbert was pacing the hall, and attempting

to conceal his emotion ; but with almost as little success as Wenefrede.

"Confound all this nonsense," at length exclaimed Mr. Llewelyn, who, with anything but a merry countenance, was gulping down his usual breakfast of flummery ; " why, any one might fancy, from all your long faces, that Howel was going—going—" the flummery was hotter than he was aware of, and he sputtered forth a considerable quantity of it as he exclaimed, " to be hung, instead of going to the wars to gain—to gain—another bad—ge, to be placed along side of the le—ek." To console himself for the folly of his family, he filled his large horn spoon quite full of flummery ; but it proved too hot for even his well-seasoned throat, and he uttered such exclamations as we will not astonish our readers by recording. However, a good draught of buttermilk having cooled his throat and temper at the same time, he demanded in a less stentorian voice, " Where is Howel ? I suppose so many melancholy faces frightened

the poor boy out of the hall; and no wonder either, for I'll be hanged if you have not quite frightened away my appetite for my breakfast."

So saying, he helped himself to an enormous slice of dried mutton ham.

"Howel is gone to the stable-yard to consult with John Jones and Ned Thomas about the horses that they are to take with them," said Wenefrede. But this attempt at a speech was too much for her, and she burst into tears.

Mr. Llewelyn rose from the table, and with a piece of mutton ham sticking on his fork, shook it angrily at her, and declared, in no very gentle tone, his belief that a good whipping would be of infinite service to her. But this very kind assurance failed to comfort her, and still she cried on. Herbert seated himself by her side, and was, we have good reasons for thinking, more successful; for the young lady was observed to dash away her tears, to smile most sweetly, and to turn a deaf ear to her father's exclamation of,

"What stupid fools the women of the present generation are! I wonder what my mother would have thought of them!"

Much to the comfort of the party at the breakfast table, it at this instant occurred to Mr. Llewelyn that he was a much better judge of a horse than his son, or all his grooms; and he took himself off to the stable. After a very wordy and noisy discussion, and a great discrepancy of opinion, Mr. Llewelyn at length decided upon the horses he considered most likely to do honour to the principality; and they were forthwith ordered to be got in readiness for Ned Thomas and John Jones.

Now, as Mr. Llewelyn—in common with many a country esquire of the present day, who prides himself on his knowledge of horse-flesh—held the opinion of any other person on the subject in utter contempt, it was a most fortunate circumstance that Ned Thomas's remark to John Jones, on leaving the stable, of, "That fine black horse that I wanted to

ride is the better horse after all," was not overheard by his master, or he would have "written him down an ass" forthwith.

"And do you really like going to the wars?" asked a servant girl, who met Ned Thomas and John Jones, as they were leaving the stable.

They both declared, with an oath, that it was all one to them where they went, as long as their young master was with them. War or peace, it mattered not. But they confessed that they did not like the idea of going amongst the stupid English, who could not speak a word of their native language; and who would, as Griffith Lloyd informed them, call them "Splutter your nails," billy-goats, and taffies. They only wished that they had but a little more time, and then they would get Griffith Lloyd to teach them a little English; and they would soon let all London know what it was to miscall a Welshman. Perhaps some misgivings as to the figure his serving men would cut in London crossed

the mind of Howel, who had overheard their observations ; but he most heroically determined upon bearing the ridicule that, through them, would ultimately fall upon himself, rather than wound their feelings by substituting more enlightened and polished attendants in their place. A groom of Howel's grandfather, who delighted in the name of Jinkin Hughes, and who was a contemporary of Evan (Mrs. Wynn), was to take charge, not only of Howel's horses, but of his serving men ; for he, like Evan, could speak a language that was styled by them, and by the complaisant even after they had crossed the border, English. He had also often visited London during the life of his late master, General Llewelyn, and had dealt many "shrewd blows" in many a battle fought in the troublous times of Charles I. ; but now his years seemed to have rendered a seat on a bench by the fire, where he might "shoulder his crutch, and show how fields were won," a much more fitting place for him than the

tented plain. But, like the war-horse, he seemed "to smell the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting," and longed once more to listen to the music of the "spirit-stirring drum, and the ear-piercing fife." Vainly did Mrs. Llewelyn try to persuade him to remain in peace and comfort at home: it was advice that shared the fate of much excellent counsel, and of the cuckoo's note in June,—it was "heard, but not regarded." He declared it would break his heart if he was not permitted to follow his young master to the wars; and Mr. Llewelyn at length recommended his wife not to say anything more on the subject, but allow "the foolish old blockhead to go to destruction his own way."

Now this partiality for fighting, on the part of Jinkin Hughes, was a subject of no small surprise to Mr. Llewelyn; who though he had, in early youth and manhood, sundry times and oft, talked of turning soldier, yet some untoward event or other had always

come between him and his military ardour, and obliged him to postpone his brave intentions from year to year, till old age came upon him. At last, when one of his friends, who liked to joke him on his wish to appear "gallantly armed" before he died, proposed to him to join King William's expedition to Ireland, he replied,—

"Why, well indeed, now, Thomas Thomas, I have thought for some time past that there might, perhaps, be as much fun in a fox chase as in a battle; and that one's conscience might feel quite as much at its ease when drinking the health of a neighbour in a cup of good ale, after killing a fox, as it would do after wiping the blood off your sword, which had been the death of more than one man, and after you had wished death and destruction to the rest of your enemies. So, though I am a great friend to the protestant religion, I think, with your leave, that I will stay at home."

But to return to Howel. As he was leaving

the stable-yard, he encountered a messenger who had been sent by his mother, requesting his immediate presence in his own bedroom. He found her kneeling before a large leather trunk, with deeply-flushed cheeks and a weary and perplexed expression of face, vainly striving to find room for several bottles of cordial water: good (if family traditions might be believed) for "every ill that flesh is heir to."

"Oh, Howel bach!" she exclaimed, as soon as her son entered the room, "do tell me what I am to do with these bottles."

"Take them out of the trunk, my dear mother," said Howel, kissing her flushed cheek, and trying to look as grave as she seemed to think this very important affair required him to do.

"Take them out of the box!" exclaimed Mrs. Llewelyn, in a tone of horror; "and what, my dear boy, do you think would become of you in a foreign land without them? No, if anything must be left out let it be that

great ugly sword of your grandfather's, that will neither bend nor break to make room for anything else."

"My grandfather's sword has been of more service to the last generation than any cordial water that ever was concocted," said Howel, laughing; "but if it will add to your peace of mind, madam, why I will take it out and wear it by my side."

"Do, do; there's a good boy."

After the unbending sword had been removed, it was discovered that there was room for the bottles of cordial water; and also for a family bible, which Mrs. Llewelyn deposited by their sides with great veneration: then seizing the hand of her son, she begged that he would look upon it as the greatest earthly blessing in his possession. Howel kissed his mother's forehead with respectful affection, and assured her that her wishes on this subject should be most religiously observed by him.

"And, oh, my dear boy!" said Mrs. Grace

Jones, a most venerable-looking old house-keeper, who was superintending the packing, "if you love us, or your own welfare, never go into any of those horrid chapels in foreign countries, or listen to anything those wicked priests may say to you; for fear they should persuade you to turn a Roman Catholic priest yourself: and that would break all our hearts."

"I will promise you not to turn a Roman Catholic priest, Grace Jones, till Eva Wynn has turned nun, and taken the veil," said Howel, smiling, and looking at Eva: who was almost as busily engaged in packing for him as his mother, and with about as light a heart. But Howel's answer proved anything but a satisfactory one to Mrs. Grace, and she observed,—

"Why, talking of nuns reminds me of all the dreadful stories that James Hughes, of Pen y Bont, used to tell about the nuns in Ireland. I should never close my eyes in peace if I thought you would ever set your

foot inside a convent. Why I have heard James Hughes declare, over and over again, with a big oath, that from the abbess down to the cook, they were all alike; and bad enough to corrupt a saint, to say nothing of the poor chance a sinner ran amongst them."

"I am so well aware, my dear Grace Jones, that I am no saint," said Howel, laughing, "that, lest I should become a great sinner, I will avoid a nunnery as I would do a house infected by the plague; and look upon a nun as the Old Gentleman dressed up in a cap and veil."

Mrs. Grace heaved a sigh, and turned away her head. The lower class amongst the Welsh sigh when they are sad, cross, weary, or in want of something better to do; but sadness alone called forth the deep and frequent sighs that filled up every pause in Mrs. Grace Jones's conversation. She had been present at Howel's birth, and had watched over his early infancy with a delight and a

pride only inferior to that of his mother ; and, indeed, at times to such an extent did she carry her enthusiasm, that it would almost appear as if she had forgotten she did not stand in that degree of relationship to him. She regarded Molly Davies, at whose farmhouse he was placed to be nursed (in conformity with the general custom of that period amongst the rich), as the most enviable woman in the whole world ; and when the time arrived for his being sent to school, her appetite and good spirits alike deserted her : she declared, over and over again, that at her age she must not hope ever to see "her dear boy again ;" and she wept over him and blessed him, with a solemnity which convinced all who heard it, that she believed that, in this world, they would never meet again. But the same scene having been repeated after every vacation, from the period of his first departing for school till his last term at the university, even the tender-hearted Mrs. Llewelyn had become accustomed to it ;

and the recollection of this constantly-repeated scene occasioned her to pay much less attention to Mrs. Grace's deep-drawn sighs and mournful looks than she would otherwise have done. Indeed, she felt a little inclined to quarrel with her for adding to her sorrows, instead of endeavouring to lessen them.

"But," exclaimed Mrs. Llewelyn, in a whisper, to Eva, and dashing away, at the same time, a tear, "I ought to be the last person in the world to blame any one for looking sad to-day; when only a minute ago I felt inclined to find fault with the sun for shining so brightly, and making everything look so cheerful, whilst I felt so gloomy and sad."

Mrs. Grace, finding that her sorrow did not meet with the sympathy she expected from Mrs. Llewelyn, turned to Eva, and tried to convince her of the utter hopelessness of ever expecting to see Howel back again. Eva at length grew weary of Mrs. Grace's dismal forebodings, and exclaimed,—

"What would you say, Grace Jones bach, should you not only live to see Howel return, but have to address him as 'my lord:' her most gracious Majesty, Queen Anne, having been pleased to confer upon him the title of 'Baron Llewelyn of Glyn Llewelyn,' as a reward for his noble conduct in more than one battle?"

Mrs. Grace was so much delighted with the imaginary honours in store for "her dear boy," that she dried her eyes and quite forgot to sigh; and now appeared as anxious for him to depart, as a few moments before she had been to detain him at home. The "tear forgot as soon as shed" is, we believe, a blessing bestowed on extreme old age, as well as upon that of childhood. And surely that such should be the case is a most merciful dispensation of Providence; for, as "it is one scene of parting here," did we feel with equal acuteness the severing of the viewless chain that links us with this world, from the cradle to the grave, which of us would

live to see three score? But my thoughts wander from "Llewelyn's Heir," and I must call them back and commence a new chapter.

CHAPTER II.

A wrinkled hag, of wicked fame :

* * * *

She mumbles forth her backward pray'rs,—

An untam'd scold of four score years.

GAY.

THE poorest man in Wales will generally be found to be rich in cousins ; and the calculating boy would, probably, have been somewhat puzzled to number exactly all who claimed relationship with the rich and powerful Llewelyns of Glyn Llewelyn ; and—

—“Folks, male and female, came in by whole dozens, Of neighbours, acquaintance, of friends, and of cousins,”

on the day before that named for Howel's departure, to bid him farewell. As Herbert Gladstone glanced his eyes over the enormous

party assembled in the hall, the thought crossed his mind that as many fires, and as many cooks as were revealed to the princess in "Riquet with the Tuft" in the subterranean kitchen, would be necessary to prepare a dinner for such a host of visitors ; but when, at length, it was placed upon the table, he silently acknowledged that Welsh hospitality could accomplish quite as great wonders in the cooking line (at least as far as abundance was concerned), as if a fairy had presided over the roast and boiled meats.

Each guest, Herbert observed, came provided with a knife and fork,—a custom prevalent in Poland, at a much later period. But what would an elegant female of the present day say to the bill of fare that we are about to lay before our readers? An enormous round of beef pressed heavily on the bottom of the table, whilst a boiled turkey, of such gigantic size as completely to conceal Mrs. Llewelyn from the view of all but her nearest neighbours, was placed at the top ; and a roasted

pig might be seen looking most savourily at a goose that adorned the opposite side. Groat and suet puddings were mixed in "most admired disorder" with greens and huge dishes of potatoes : the latter vegetable being at this period a luxury to be met with only at the tables of the rich. Every remaining nook or corner was occupied by sweet puddings, pies, and custards, till not a square inch of the tablecloth was visible. The centre of the table was ornamented with a pyramid of whipped creams, of such an extent and height as to render the demolishing of it almost as impossible a task as that of its more famed, but probably not more admired namesake, on the plains of Gizeh. The boiled beef was "removed" by a roasted sirloin; the boiled turkey suddenly appeared to have been transformed into a roasted one, and the stations lately held by the pig and goose were resigned to a fore-quarter of kid and three ducks.

"Why, Jones, how confoundedly stingy you are with your duck!" exclaimed Mr. Llewelyn,

in hospitable rage. "You have only sent poor Tom Owen a wing, and a bit of the breast. Don't spare them, my good fellow; there are three more ready to take their place!"

It would appear, from the enormous quantity of provisions consumed on this occasion, that grief is sometimes hungry as well as dry; and that Howel's old familiar friends and relations were trying to eat off their excessive grief at his departure. Poor Mrs. Llewelyn tried in vain to eat, drink, and be merry with her friends, and a very unusual silence reigned at the head of the table; and though Mr. Llewelyn talked much, and laughed long and loud, to those who were well acquainted with his laugh it sounded more like sorrow than mirth. Howel's cheerfulness was also evidently assumed; and the lamentations, long and loud, at his being about to leave his native country, that were heard on every side, were but little calculated to raise his spirits.

We believe in no nation on earth is the love of "father land" more deeply rooted than in

the hearts of the inhabitants of North Wales. We do not even make an exception in favour of the Swiss. Glory may tempt, gold may seduce a Briton from his native mountains or vales; but his hope by day, his dream by night, will be, that he may gaze upon them once more ere death shall close his eyes. Is glory the bait that has lured him from the home of his ancestors? He pursues it with the wildest ardour, that he may speedily return, crowned with bays, and add another honourable name to a pedigree already extending to the days of Noah. Should poverty compel him to seek for gold in other climes, the one absorbing thought will be the acquiring of wealth: not from any sordid love of gold, but from the hope that he may return home and purchase some small portion of his native soil, on which he may rear a cottage; and end his days within sight of his native mountains, or where he may hear the dash of the wild waves to which his ears have listened in childhood. The scenery of other lands, though clothed in

nature's fairest garb, serves but to recall to his mind the home of his fathers ; which is pictured in his " mind's eye " as a spot still more lovely. The Alps and the Pyrenees, sink into insignificance when Snowdon or Cader Idris in imagination rise up to his view ; for around them cling all his earliest and dearest recollections : each serious thought, each cheerful hope of the future, points to the time when he shall again behold his " father land ; " when his native language shall remind him of joy and home, and a strain on the three-stringed harp cheerily bid him welcome ; when he shall once more behold the neat white-washed church, with its peaceful-looking and retired churchyard, and the ancient yew-tree, under whose sombre shade, when his days are numbered, he hopes to rest. With such ardent feelings for their native land glowing in their breasts, no wonder that all the guests assembled on the present occasion, should pity—and many blame—Howel for leaving the home of his childhood.

" Well, you see, now, it is but an idle life

that the young squire would lead at home in this country," was the answer made by one of the pitying party to a gentleman who was inclined to blame; "and had he been a son of mine, sorry as I should have been to part with him, I would have sent him abroad for a year or two, that he might see something 'of men and manners!' You see, young squire fancies just now that fighting and all that sort of thing is very pleasant pastime; but I saw something of the wars in Charles the First's time, and I am pretty sure that after he has been shot at a few times, and lived on dead dogs and cats for a few weeks, he will agree with me in thinking that glory may be all very well in its way, but that one gets deucedly soon tired of it after getting lots of wounds and nothing to eat; and that he will be very thankful to find himself back again at Glyn Llewelyn, and will settle down here for the rest of his days, quite cured of all wish for rambling."

"Indeed I hope so, in my heart," was the

reply. "But I must say, that I never knew a bit of good come of a man's leaving his own county; and it's a deal of bad that has come to my knowledge of young fellows who have been foolish enough to do so. Lord bless my heart, Jones!" he continued, laying his hard, broad hand most emphatically on his neighbour's; "why you must remember Jack Hughes, of Geinas, that went over to Dublin with King Charles's men. Poor fellow! he was never the same man after a trick, as I have been told was played him by some rascally Paddies—though Jack maintained to his dying day that it was no trick, but a real ghost, that appeared to him one night in the likeness of a goat, with eyes as big as a small plate, and bright and fierce as red-hot peat: that they lighted up the room as well as a dozen lamps would have done; and that he saw an enormous leek in its mouth, which it mumbled and mumbled for some time, and then spit it in poor Jack's face; and coming close up to him, cried 'bah!' in his ear, and

butted at him with his enormous horns. Dear me, if Jack wasn't in a fright; and then the horrid old beast backed out of the room, keeping his fiery red eyes fixed upon him, and saying in a christian-like voice, 'Oh, fie! Jack Hughes, you are drunk!—fie, fie, you are drunk!' Many and many a time I have heard that poor lad declare, that his peace of mind was entirely ruined by that horrid goat; for that he never took a cup too much ale but he saw his horrid eyes glaring at him, and heard his horrid unearthly voice screaming in his ear, 'Oh, fie, Jack Hughes, you are drunk!' No, no; that story is quite enough for me: take my word for it, no son of mine shall ever cross the seas."

"Mr. Williams," at this instant exclaimed Mrs. Llewelyn, addressing the utterer of this sapient speech; "you do not mean to say that you have finished your dinner?"

"Oh! bless your heart, no, madam;" responded Mr. Williams, seizing in "hot haste" his knife and fork, which he had laid down

whilst relating his story of Jack Hughes. "I hav'n't anything like finished; I have only been resting a little bit."

As one of the servants was removing the pyramid, an enormous glass which adorned the centre, towering high above the other glasses which stood around it, slipped off the plateau, and fell with a startling crash upon the stone floor. Mrs. Llewelyn turned dreadfully pale, and an involuntary shudder appeared to run like an electric shock around the table. A silence of some minutes' duration was at last broken by Mr. Llewelyn, who, with an indifferent attempt at a laugh, exclaimed,—

"Well, sure now, not one of you can really believe that the falling down of that glass can be a bad omen for any one but me, who will have to purchase another to replace it."

Yet not one of the assembled guests was heard to agree with their host, and to declare that a belief in the falling of glass as a bad omen was a mere superstitious folly; but dozens of voices might be heard on the other

side of the question, declaring their firm belief in it, and quoting instances of the falling of glass having been the forerunner of some dire misfortune in their family; till at length the tears rolled down Mrs. Llewelyn's cheeks: she rose hastily from the table, and, followed by all the ladies present, quitted the hall.

This strange superstition, which once held sway over all classes, not only in Wales but in many parts of England, still maintains, even in the present enlightened age, a strong hold over the imagination of the lower classes; and many a careless servant who has placed a glass in a position from which "it cannot choose" but slip, deploras its fall ten times more feelingly than does its owner: firmly believing that it fell to warn her of a coming event of a tragic nature.

Wenefrede, who neither from her education nor disposition was likely to escape the prejudices common to her nation, no sooner reached the sitting-room, than she threw

herself into a chair, and burying her face in her hands, wept aloud. Eleanor went up to her, and taking her hands from her face, bade her, in a tone between a command and an entreaty, dry her eyes. Wenefrede, who was accustomed to obey the slightest order of her imperious sister, dashed away the large drops that were coursing each other down her cheeks, and, looking up in her face, tried to smile : saying—

“I know, Eleanor, that you have no faith in omens; but, oh! I have such a cold weight at my heart, that I feel—I feel—as if that glass fell to tell me I should never see Herbert Gladstone again.” And she laid her throbbing temples on Eleanor’s shoulder, and cried bitterly.

“Wenefrede,” said Eleanor in a low voice, “tell me, if you really place any faith in this absurd omen, why you imagine that it refers to Herbert Gladstone, and not to your brother Howel?”

Wenefrede hid her blushing cheeks in her

hands, and, in a voice so low as to be with difficulty heard by Eleanor, replied,—

“Oh, Eleanor! pray,—pray do not be angry with me, for indeed I love Howel dearly; but when the glass fell I quite forgot him, and thought of no one but Herbert.”

“I am afraid you are a sad simpleton, Wenefrede,” answered Eleanor, “and have a genius for nothing but making mountains out of mole-hills. But come with me and I will give you some cooling lotion to wash your eyes with, for they are as red as Howel’s ferret’s, and very unlikely, in their present state, to induce any one to swear eternal constancy to them.”

Eleanor led Wenefrede from the room, and as they quitted it Eva and several other persons present observed that Eleanor looked around her with an air of pride and satisfaction, for which they could assign no reason.

Wenefrede’s absence was a short one, and on her return she joined a small party of young ladies, who were standing far back in

one of the recessed windows, and conversing in a somewhat mysterious tone, and with much earnestness of manner. The subject of their discourse was Catryn Hên, a fortune-teller of notorious celebrity in the neighbourhood; and whose predictions, it was confidently affirmed, were never known to fail, not only by the lower and uneducated classes, but by numbers of the rich, powerful, and educated, who consider it no disgrace to believe in the "hidden power of herbs, and might of magic spell."

"Catryn Hên knows everything: knows the name of people she never saw before, the instant they enter her hut. I am sure, if I had a brother or a lover going to the wars, that I would go and consult her about their future fortunes," said a young lady, at the very instant that Wenefrede joined the group. Wenefrede said not a word, but listened in breathless attention to the marvellous tales which several of the party related of the supernatural knowledge of Catryn Hên; and at

length decided upon putting it to the test. After a long consultation, it was agreed that two of the young ladies present should accompany Wenefrede to the hut of the fortune-teller, and learn from the witch the fate that awaited Howel and Herbert Gladstone. Eva was not invited to join the party, for her superior education and natural strength of mind had, in a great measure, emancipated her from the shackles of superstition; and they were aware that she would either strenuously oppose their visiting Catryn Hên, or turn the whole affair into ridicule. The path which led to the hut of the fortune-teller was through a deep and narrow valley, thickly strewed over with rocks that were

“Confusedly hurl’d,
The fragments of an earlier world;”

which looked as if, in some fearful conflict with the mighty mountains that were towering in everlasting grandeur above them, they had been cast from their lofty station into the dark vale below. The entrance to this gorge

was so narrow, that a slight bend in the rough path entirely concealed it from view; and it appeared as if the inhabitants of this secluded spot were entirely cut off from all communication with the rest of the world, for it was surrounded on all sides by "bare rocky mountains, to all living things inhospitable," and which no human foot could attempt to scale: they towered so high above the head, that the

"Wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue."

The day, which had hitherto been remarkably fine, suddenly became overcast: large clouds of pall-like blackness might be seen slowly rolling through the sky with majestic solemnity, and adding a temporary grandeur to the highest peaks of the mountains, by resting on them for a brief space. A few large drops of rain, that sounded like a shower of lead as they fell upon the crags, and a distant but often-repeated burst of thunder,

warned our young wanderers not to linger on their way; and accordingly they proceeded at a rapid pace up a path that had been worn in the rock by a winter torrent, and which was, at this season of the year, tolerably dry, though far from smooth. High above their heads might be seen a small, miserable-looking hut, built on a projecting ledge of a rock; and which appeared to be a much more fitting spot for the eyry of an eagle than the home of a human being.

At a short distance from the hut, a stream rushed headlong down from the lofty mountains—

“That like giants stand,
To sentinel enchanted land—”

and flowed over moss-covered and fantastic pieces of rock, that lay in the bed of the stream and occasioned a sudden check to the torrent: creating innumerable miniature waterfalls. A tottering wooden bridge was thrown across this mountain stream, and formed the only approach to the hut; but

when that frail path had been trod in safety, our young adventurers discovered that their dangers and troubles were not at an end, for the shaky bridge only crossed a part of the torrent, and in order to reach the hut, they must spring from one large, round, slippery stone to another, for a considerable distance. This exploit would have been attended with danger to the inexperienced, but it only afforded a subject for mirth to our fair wanderers, who sprang from one slippery resting-place to another with a lightness and speed that might have excited wonder and envy in the breast of a lowland maiden. But no sooner was the party safely landed than all trace of levity vanished from their countenances, and they approached the hut in perfect silence: a tribute of respect Catryn Hên demanded from all her votaries.

Wretched as the hut looked at a distance, all its evils appeared to have increased three-fold on a nearer view. Many an English pigsty would have risen to a palace in the

comparison, and no well-bred dog would have lain down in it. No window admitted air or light; and a hole in the roof, through which it was intended that the smoke should 'escape; served only to admit the rain; a high, barren, grey rock, against which the hut rested, sending back the smoke every time it attempted to quit this abode of wretchedness and vice. Everything without the hut bespoke the most bitter poverty, and held out but slight encouragement to any one to follow the unlawful calling of Catryn Hên. Yet, notwithstanding all this outward appearance of poverty, Catryn was known to be very rich. Gold was the god of her idolatry; and at its shrine she had offered up not only her peace of mind in this world, but her hopes of happiness in the world beyond the grave. To obtain gold, night as well as day did she toil in her vocation; and highly did she force her deluded victims to pay for every word that fell from her oracular lips. And it was asserted that there were few young men or maidens, within a

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circuit of ten miles, amongst the lower orders, a portion of whose hard-earned wages had not found their way into her well-filled coffers.

Before the party entered the hut, they suddenly paused and looked around them, and then at each other; and although they did not give utterance to their feelings, in their hearts lurked a sensation of awe and fright, and they wished themselves back again in Glyn Llewelyn Hall. Sublime was the view from the rock on which the hut seemed to be suspended: an expanse of sea and land that almost wearied the eye, lay stretched before them, whilst rocks, rude and shapeless, were near at hand, and the mountain-torrent "rushing o'er its pebbly bed" was not only heard, but seen, as its foaming waters played around a time-worn stone that impeded its progress to the sea.

The poor frightened girls, who were anxious to conceal their feelings from each other and delay their interview with Catryn Hên as

long as they possibly could, stood gazing at the view, till a dark impenetrable cloud swept by them and concealed the mountains that overhung the hut from their sight: a thick mist arose from the narrow vale, clung around the rock in dark folds, hid the whole landscape in a cold, cheerless-looking gray veil, and bid fair to wet them to the skin; they then "screwed their courage to the sticking place," and entered the hut, the interior of which they found to be quite as wretched as they had painted it in their mind's eye.

Though the day was oppressively hot, large sods of peat, glowing like a furnace, lay upon the hearth; close to which, on a high backed chair of ancient and massive workmanship, with her eyes closed—evidently by sleep—sat Catryn Hên. More than four-score years had passed over her head, and they had left traces, not only of age, but of anguish of mind, on her pale and deeply wrinkled forehead; across which a profusion of snow-white hair was parted, and carelessly

twisted into her back hair : this was totally unconfined, and allowed to escape beneath a three-cornered red handkerchief that was fastened under her chin, and twisted about her shoulders in long snake-like folds. The rest of her dress differed in no respect from that worn by the poorest peasant in North Wales ; with the exception of a large row of ebony beads which she wore around her neck, and from which was suspended a large cross, formed from the wood of the mountain ash : it had been blessed by a Roman Catholic priest, and she believed would secure her from falling a victim to fascinations of any description. Strange that one whose vocation consisted in deceiving, should, in her turn, become the dupe of a more palpable deceit than any employed by her to delude others ! Nor was this the only proof exhibited about her person of her belief in charms ; for on the forefinger of her left hand she wore a ring curiously waved with various colours. This ring, she affirmed, she had picked up when a very young girl, in

an unfrequented and desolate spot: that it was hailed by her as a happy omen, and that she had received the congratulations of all her friends on the occasion, who assured her that from henceforward she would prosper in all her undertakings.

Many deluded beings have in a by-gone age lost much time in hunting for a similar ring, which they believed not only to be endowed with magical virtues, but also to be of magical origin: it being formed by a party of snakes meeting in a lonely spot, about Midsummer eve, joining their heads together and hissing till a bubble appeared on the neck of one of them; the hissing then waxed louder, and was continued till the bubble skipped over the tail of their companion, and on reaching the ground, instantly hardened, assuming the appearance of a glass ring.

But we must resume our description of the hut of the fortune-teller. A bedstead that appeared to be of the same date as the chair on which she was seated, and over which was

thrown a dirty, ragged coverlid ; a curiously carved chest, strongly bound with iron, and a large iron pot, completed all the visible furniture of this miserable hovel. A confused heap of clothes, of a dark colour, lay in a gloomy corner ; and one of the fair adventurers looked at the heap till she fancied she saw it move. The affrighted girls drew close to each other, and gazed in silent terror at the stern countenance of the sleeping witch. They felt as if she had thrown a spell around them ; and that, although they longed, they had not the power to quit her presence. At length a deep groan was uttered by Catryn, her breast heaved, she grasped her long bony hands with a convulsive motion, and pressed her white thin lips together till they looked of the colour of blood ; then with a sudden start she awoke, and gazed round her with a fierce, wild expression in her keen gray eyes, which made the hearts of her visitors to quake. Having heard of late that Catryn Hên had on several occasions exhibited symptoms of insanity, Wene-

frede felt even more alarmed at the hag's wild looks than did her companions, and was deprived of the power of answering the haughtily-asked question of—"Whence come ye?" But the witch apparently did not wish to be answered, for she quickly added,—

"I will tell you not only whence ye come, but your errand with me. Ye come from the hall, and seek to know the fate that awaits Howel Llewelyn and his friend."

Her visitors started, and looked at each other: they were in truth quite panic-struck at discovering that their very thoughts were known by Catryn Hên. Wenefrede at length, gasping for breath, exclaimed,—

"Oh! tell me what will be their fate in war? Will they ever return to their homes? And who will be the wife of Herbert Gladstone?"

This last question was asked in a tone very little above a whisper, and it required no unearthly wisdom to discover that she believed her future happiness or misery was involved in the answer.

“And what will you give me, pretty lady, for answering all these questions?” asked Catryn, holding out her hand to receive her fee.

Wenefrede placed a crown piece on the wrinkled palm, and the long withered fingers closed eagerly over it; but the witch at the same instant exclaimed in a tone of ineffable scorn,—

“And is this—this the paltry sum you offer in payment for all the knowledge you seek at my hands? Why, for answering a single question of less importance than any of the three named by you, I have been rewarded with three times the sum.”

This crown piece was all the silver Wenefrede's purse contained, but through its silken meshes Catryn's sharp eyes perceived some pieces of gold, and one of them she instantly determined should be hers before she allowed her timid victim to depart. To the first questions she returned such vague, yet, at the same time, subtle answers, that although she ap-

peared to promise glory and fame, escape from all dangers by sea and land, and a speedy return to the young heroes; yet, should her predictions fail, she left a loop-hole by which she might escape, without a slur resting on her character as a fortune-teller.

The last and most interesting question alone remained unanswered. Catryn glanced her eyes at the purse which Wenefrede still held in her hand, mumbled forth some unintelligible rhymes, and turned over the leaves of a black-looking, well-thumbed book, which she produced from under the tattered coverlid of her bed. She then asked to look at the palm of Wenefrede's hand, and pretending to study with profound attention the lines she discovered there, shook her head, and declared that one gifted with higher powers of divination than she possessed must be applied to, ere the question touching who should be the bride of Herbert Gladstone could be answered. Wenefrede felt "as if her courage was oozing out at her fingers' ends," and as if she would gladly make her

escape from the hut, leaving it for time to disclose this all-important secret; but the terrific Catryn grasped her hand, and squeezed it till pain forced tears into her eyes; whilst her tormentor exclaimed,—

“Poor child! poor child! you would run away from me if you dared.” Without relinquishing her hold of Wenefrede, she struck her long walking-staff slowly and distinctly seven times on the hearth-stone; she then emptied the contents of a box, which she drew from her pocket, on the hot sods of peat, and the hut was instantly filled with a dark smoke which smelt strongly of sulphur. The three affrighted maidens uttered a wild shriek, and clung closely to each other. The smoke gradually died away, but the terror of the poor girls was only increased by this circumstance; for it enabled them to penetrate once more into the darkest nooks of the hut: and lo! there stood a tall figure clothed with all the attributes assigned by the vulgar to the Evil One.

“Speak your wishes, maiden,” said Catryn,

who still tightly grasped the hand of the almost senseless Wenefrede; "but remember, pretty child, that he who will now answer you receives no payment but in gold: bright gold." Wenefrede made a desperate effort to escape from Catryn and follow her companions, who were hastening with the speed inspired by fright out of the hut; but Catryn maintained her hold with a strength little to have been anticipated from her years, and Wenefrede was sinking into her arms in a fainting fit, when the door of the hut was suddenly pushed inwards, and a powerful dog rushed through it, uttering a low, deep growl.

"Tywysog!" exclaimed Wenefrede, in a voice of hysterical joy.

The dog flew at the dark figure in the corner, pulled him to the ground, and before either Wenefrede or Catryn could interfere, had not only torn off his dress of bull's hide (which was ornamented with the horns, hoofs, and tail of the animal) but had inflicted such severe bites on his legs as ren-

dered him unable to rise; and he rolled on the floor uttering dreadful oaths and groans. Catryn tried in vain to raise him, and as she stooped over him she joined her curses and imprecations with his; and whilst this unhallowed duet was performing, Wenefrede, trembling from head to foot, slipped out of the hut, followed by Tywysog, who dragged after him the skin of the bull.

At a short distance from the hut, the affrighted girls met Howel and Eva; they had been guided to the spot by Tywysog, who had evinced such evident signs of distress at their not turning into the path which led to the hut, that they had turned back and followed him. Not a single sentence of an explanatory nature could be obtained from the terrified girls: all that they either could or would utter was,—

“Oh, for pity's sake, come on! Come on, or we shall all be killed!” And seizing Howel by the arms, they hurried him towards the stepping stones. But they

had not advanced many yards before the voice of Catryn Hên was heard uttering curses, loud and fierce, against them. The damp thick mist that hung over the hut concealed her from their view, and the darkness that surrounded her seemed to add deeper horror to the fearful words she uttered.

"May the curse of the woman you have ruined follow you!" she exclaimed. "May your misery in this world be so great and so unceasing that you shall pray for death; and when your prayer is granted, may the hottest stone in hell be your bed!"

At this instant, a flash of most brilliant lightning dispersed, for an instant, the darkness that surrounded the hut, and the figure of the fortune-teller became distinctly visible. As the lurid light fell on her pale countenance, and exhibited her wild attire and still wilder gestures of arms and hands, it might have led those who gazed on her to ask with Macbeth, "Live you, or are you aught that man may question?"

Even Howel shuddered as he looked at her ; but no sooner did she perceive him than she grew more calm, and, in an altered voice, exclaimed,—

“Howel Llewelyn, I curse not you : at the risk of your own life you rushed through scorching flames to save my child. Go your ways in peace ; and, oh ! could the blessing of such a wretch as I am avail aught, I would bless you.”

Frequent flashes of lightning served to guide the party over the slippery stones and tottering bridge ; and when safely landed on the other side of it, as large drops of rain had again begun to fall, Howel proposed that they should seek for shelter in a narrow but deep cave in a rock that was near at hand, till the storm, that was rapidly approaching them, had passed by. But to this advice Eva alone paid attention. Fear seemed to have metamorphosed Wenefrede and her companions into so many Atalantas : they appeared to regard the raging of the tempest with in-

difference, but flew, with a speed that might have bid fair to rival that of the princess of Scyros, down the steep path, from the raging of the tongue of Catryn Hên, which they fancied they heard in every gust of wind. The rain came down in torrents, but they did not regard or even notice it; and they slackened not their pace till they reached the hall-door at Glyn Llewelyn. With a desperate effort they pushed it open, and nearly exhausted with excitement, terror, and fatigue, and with water streaming from their dresses, they rushed into the hall; to the no small astonishment of Mr. Llewelyn and a party of elderly gentlemen, who were still seated at the high table with jugs of ale before them.

“Where the deuce have you been? and what is the matter with you all?” exclaimed Mr. Llewelyn.

“Well, now, you are wet,” said one of the old gentleman, taking hold of Wenefrede’s dress; and whilst sundry truisms equally

important were being uttered, Mr. Llewelyn was calling loudly for dry clothes for the somewhat forlorn-looking damsels, and trying to glean a little sense from the unintelligible tale repeated by all at the same time. And where was [Herbert Gladstone? Closeted with Eleanor, and occupied with subjects of deep import to his future happiness. He had, soon after dinner, solicited a private interview with Mr. Llewelyn, and had stated to him, in a manly, honest manner, his future prospects, and his attachment to Wenefrede, and ended by requesting his permission to offer her his hand before he left Glyn Llewelyn.

“Well, now, indeed, Master Gladstone,” replied Mr. Llewelyn, when he made this request, “you see had it but been your happy fate to be a Welshman born and bred, I should have preferred you for a son-in-law before any man I ever saw. But then, to be sure, your being an Englishman is your misfortune, not your fault; and you need not look

so downcast about it, for I can assure you, my good fellow, in spite of that objection, that I shall be confoundedly happy to see my dear little girl your wife some day or other; but it must not be at present. No, you must see a little more of life first. Wenefrede is quite a child: you must wait a year or two before you talk to her of matrimony. And remember, my dear lad, there must be no engagement. No, no, I hate long courtships. Never knew any good come of them, from Jacob's seven years courtship downwards; so I say again, no long engagements for any of my family. Howel shall be married when he comes back from the wars: I can tell good Madam Wynn. Why he and Eva have been courting upwards of three months; and I got both my wives to name the wedding-day in half the time. But speak to your father, and I'll be hanged if he does not give you the same advice as I have done."

So saying, he seized both of Herbert's hands, and gave them what has been termed a pump-

handle shake, and then left him to his not particularly agreeable meditations; but they were, much to his satisfaction, soon broken in upon by the entrance of Eleanor, to whom he recapitulated his catalogue of hopes and fears. Eleanor quickly perceived that if any objections were raised on the part of Lord Gladstone to the match, it would be in consequence of Wenefrede's fortune not equalling his expectations; and she contrived to state in the course of their conversation, that she had always looked upon Wenefrede more in the light of a daughter than of a sister, and that she intended leaving the bulk of her large fortune to her and her heirs.

"But," expostulated Herbert, "you may marry; and therefore, my dear madam, do not make any promises now that you may repent of hereafter."

"Marry!" exclaimed Eleanor, in a voice that made Herbert start: "you, Master Gladstone," she continued, "are a reader of Milton, and may remember that he has made Satan say,

‘ Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven ;’ now, ten thousand times would I prefer reigning sole mistress of my own actions and fortune in the hell (if it be a hell) of celibacy, than serve the best husband that ever lived in the fool’s paradise of wedlock.”

This conversation was suddenly brought to a close, by an unusual stir in the house and loud talking in the hall ; and by the voice of Mr. Llewelyn (who never allowed any of his words to fall to the ground) giving peremptory orders that three large tumblers of hot spiced ale should be taken up to the three half-drowned girls, and that Mrs. Llewelyn should see that they drank it. Hot spiced ale was in fact his sovereign remedy “ for all the ills that flesh is heir to.”

CHAPTER III.

"Amid Carnarvon's mountains rages loud
The repercussive roar."

WE left Eva and Howel sheltered from the rain in the deep cleft of a rock ; and soon the expected storm raged around them with tremendous fury : "a darkness that might be felt" surrounded them, and was rendered only more apparent by the blinding vividness of the forked lightning, which played in fantastic forms on the black clouds.

"From peak to peak, the rattling crags among,
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue."

But after this war of the elements had raged for a short time, the "darkness that

might be felt" passed away, "as by the stroke of an enchanter's wand," and the sun burst forth in all its summer splendour: rendering "the bare, silent, solitary glen," with its "rocky mountains, to all living things inhospitable," a wild and wondrous scene. Not the hum of a bee or buzz of a fly disturbed the solemn stillness that reigned through the earth and air: it seemed to Eva and Howel as if they were the only beings possessing the breath of life in that lone vale; and, unwilling to break the solemnity of the scene, they stood side by side for several minutes, at the mouth of the cave, without uttering a word.

The silence was at length broken by Howel, who asked Eva if she would accompany him to the hut of Catryn Hên; "for," said he, "I much fear that Tywysog has inflicted a very severe bite on the leg of the man, who I imagine to be her only son; and, should he not be able to leave the hut, his mother may starve before any one would take her a supply of food; therefore I think it would be desira-

ble to look into the state of the miserable old woman, who is, I believe, more mad than wicked."

Before they entered the hut, Howel took the precaution of throwing down one of his gloves, and ordered Tywysog to take charge of it till he returned; judging that the presence of the dog would revive afresh the rage of Catryn. The door of the hut was closed, and when Howel pushed it open, Catryn, who had evidently been "nursing her wrath to keep it warm," greeted him with a look that might have reminded him of Sir William Lucy's wish—

"Oh! were mine eyeballs into bullets turn'd,
That I in rage might shoot them at your faces."

She was kneeling by the side of her son, (who was groaning as if in violent pain), and applying an ointment prepared from herbs, possessed of such healing virtues that a large portion of the witch's revenue was obtained by selling it to the ignorant, who

believed it to be endowed with magical powers. She started up, as Howel and Eva entered, with an alacrity little to have been expected from her age, and demanded, in a hollow, fierce voice, who was there? Howel answered her in a soothing manner, and the sound of his voice seemed to act upon her troubled spirit like oil poured on a stormy sea; for she came towards him, and, in a fondling tone, as if addressing a favorite child, exclaimed, "Llewelyn bach, is that you? oh! you are good, you are kind, to come and see a poor wretched old woman, who has no friend in this world,—or," she added with a horrid laugh, "in any other either, except, indeed, this poor wounded lad and his sister, who is far away; she whom you saved from the burning flames. But who is this?" she exclaimed, now perceiving Eva for the first time; "not one of those wicked-hearted girls, who came to mock at me and to ruin me: no, they would not dare to face the woman they have so cruelly injured, even if you stood by their side."

"Have you forgotten me, Catryn?" asked Eva; "it is not long since we last met in Conway."

"Forgotten you, my dear love; oh! no!" said Catryn; and she seized hold of her hand and kissed it: "forgotten you! no, my eyesight is growing dim, and I do not always just at first recollect a face; but a voice I have once heard I never forget. And oh! often, when I lie awake hour after hour, I wish I could hear your dear sweet voice speaking such words of comfort as you did to my poor sick child (as I call her, though in truth she is my grandchild) when she lay ill for weeks at Conway of the burns she got in that dreadful fire: when no one would go near the poor fatherless and motherless girl but you and your blessed mother; because they said that she was the grandchild of a witch. I only wish the devil had them all in his clutches, and was throwing them on his hottest fire for fuel."

"Hush! hush! Catryn," said Eva; "you,

who deal so much in old saws, must know that 'curses and chickens come home to roost.' "

"Let them come, let them come; they cannot make me more miserable than I am already," was the reply.

Howel went up to the wounded man, and asked if he would not like to be lifted from the floor, and placed on the bed. He groaned forth an assent; but although the moving him was dexterously managed, yet it caused the principal wound to bleed afresh; and the coarse cloth, used by Catryn to staunch the blood, occasioned much irritation; and the poor sufferer groaned aloud. Eva held out her pocket-handkerchief, and promised to send a supply of fine linen for future use: the fine lawn handkerchief was applied, and the wounded man blessed her in a feeble voice.

"I would ask God to bless you both," cried Catryn, "did I not know that he would not listen to the prayers of a miserable, wretched being, whom he forsook long ago."

"No, Catryn," said Eva, in a gentle voice; "it was you that forsook God."

"Well, well," said Catryn, in an impatient tone, "it comes to the same thing: no prayer of mine would be of any avail."

"We must attend to your sick grandson now, Catryn," replied Eva; "but I will come and talk to you very seriously the next time I pay a visit to Glyn Llewelyn."

"Oh, come, come!—pray, come,—you will be as welcome as food to a starving wretch," exclaimed the old woman, with the wild energy that usually marked her manner; and which, when much excited, tinged it with an appearance of insanity. "But," she added, "are you not afraid of being taunted by those who are not half so wise, not half so beautiful, and not one quarter so good as yourself, with coming to consult me about the fate of your lover? For they will never believe that pity brought you here:—pity!—pity!—pity!" she exclaimed, in so elevated a voice that the echos in the surrounding mountains caught the

word and repeated,—pity—pity—pity. “Yes, pity,” she uttered, in a still louder key, “pity for a witch!” Oh, no; they would laugh at the idea; for who, of those that believe most firmly in my knowledge in hidden events—bow lowest to obtain my favour, and bestow most freely their bright gold—is there that would not gladly throw the first faggot on the fire that was to consume me to ashes? And who is there amongst the gentle or simple that ever heard my name, that would bring me a cup of butter-milk, though they knew that I was parched with thirst; or a morsel of bread if I were dying of hunger? Why, if the lightning should set fire to my hut, and I should be perishing in the flames, those who beheld me would clap their hands, and shout, ‘the devil will have his own at last!’ Oh! who is there in this wide world who would feel pity for a witch?”

She looked earnestly in Eva’s pale face, and observing that tears stood in her eyes, she exclaimed,—

“ Oh, yes ! there is one who can feel for her ; and she will receive a reward for her kindness : if not in this world, in a world where a witch may not enter.” So saying she threw herself on the only chair the house afforded, and hid her face in her hands.

“ But, Catryn,” said Eva, in a soothing voice, laying her hand kindly on her withered arm, “ there is hope even for you.”

“ Hope ! there is no hope for me ! Why do you attempt to deceive me ?” she cried, fiercely ; and removing her hands from her face, she looked angrily at Eva, “ Oh ! you know that there is no hope for a sinner like me ; and why, therefore, should you risk your own soul by uttering a lie.”

“ Catryn,” replied Eva, gently but firmly, “ I again repeat that there is hope even for you.”

“ Tell me, tell me, dear lady ! how I may save my soul, and I will kneel to you : I will bless you night and day.”

Howel was obliged to interfere, or she

would have thrown herself on the ground before Eva.

Eva commenced with saying "I will not speak to you on this awful subject now—" when a deep sigh from the wounded man distracted Catryn's attention; who leaned over him, and asked, in a mournful voice, if she could do anything to give him ease.

"No," he replied, "my wounds do not give me much pain, now that I am laid upon the bed. I was sighing for your pains, grandmother, not for my own."

"You have always been a good boy to me, but I have been a bad, bad grandmother to you; and I shall be called to account for it some day or other, I know too well. But I must attend to you now, and try not to think of what is to happen to me hereafter. Dear heart! what a terrible bruise you have got on your arm: I must spread a plaster for that too."

But her hand shook so violently when she tried to spread it, that Eva took the knife

from her, and begged to be allowed to show her surgical skill; and so well did she perform her self-imposed task, that it called forth sundry exclamations of gratitude, and surprise from Catrya.

"Here Evan back," she said, laying the plaster on his wounded arm, "this was spread for you by the hand of an angel; and if it does not cure you, why you must trust to what the hand of a fiend—meaning my own—can do for you."

"My poor grandmother," said Evan, in a low voice to Howel, "is not half the woman she used to be: indeed at times I think she is not quite herself. Strange fancies come into her head, and she talks about the evil life she has led; though I don't believe, after all, that she is much worse than her neighbours."

Low as Evan spoke, Catrya caught the import of his speech, and she said, in a voice of affecting sadness,—

"No, no, Evan back, your poor old grand-

mother is not mad, but she often wishes that she was."

"Catryn!" exclaimed Eva, in a tone of astonishment.

"Yes, I mean what I say: I wish that I were mad. And though you may fancy that I am so now, I feel that I am quite in my senses when I stand at the door of my hut, on a calm summer's evening, and see dark figures running along the sides of the mountains, where a goat could not stand, which beckon me to follow them. Oh! it is no mad fancy that, in the deep silence of the night, I hear voices calling me by my name: no voices of this earth; and I hear those unearthly voices calling to me, not only on a calm night, but when the fiercest storm is howling around the hut. Oh, it is fearful! it is enough to drive me mad to lie awake and listen to them."

"You have lived in this lonely spot till you have become fanciful, Catryn," said Eva. "I wish you would be persuaded to

leave this comfortless hut, and come and live in a warm snug cottage of my mother's in Conway."

"Leave this hut! no, that would kill me at once. Here was I born, here will I be found when death comes to look for me."

So saying, she threw herself down upon her bed, and grasped tightly its massive side, as if fearing that Eva would attempt to force her from her hut.

Evening was now fast approaching, and Howel, having ascertained what would most contribute to the comfort of the wounded man, proposed to Eva to return to the hall. When Catryn perceived that they were preparing to go, she started up, and exclaimed, in a melancholy voice,—

"And you, too, are going to leave the miserable old woman! no wonder that all who have the power should leave her; but," she added, turning to Eva, "you have promised to come again, and oh, sure you will not disappoint me. But you, Howel Llewelyn,

these aged eyes will never more look upon. Oh, that it were in my power to surround you with friends, and save you from your enemies!"

"Enemies!" exclaimed Eva, in a tone of horror and surprise, "I did not think that he had one on earth."

"The worst of all enemies are those of your own household," answered Catryn.

"An enemy in his own household! oh! it must be Eleanor. Tell me, is it not Eleanor that you speak of?" demanded Eva, in an authoritative manner, seldom used to Catryn Hén.

"I accuse no one, I name no one," replied the old woman.

"Catryn, I will give you gold—gold, that you love so dearly—in abundance, if you will but answer my question," said Eva, who had changed her tone of authority to one of supplication. But it was of no avail; gold even would not tempt the old woman to open her lips: she placed one of her long bony

fingers on them, and fixed her eyes in a most determined silence on the floor. Eva, finding all her entreaties that she would speak to her were of no avail, slowly and sadly followed Howel out of the hut.

Now, lest we may be accused of making Catryn Hên express herself in a style much above her station in life, we think it advisable to state, that the peasantry in North Wales, not only speak their native language with singular propriety, but that sentiments of great poetic beauty are often uttered by most unlearned lips; and it is by no means a rare occurrence to hear a youth who, like the hermit of Prague, "never saw pen, ink, or paper," singing extempore stanzas to the harp, that would have made the fortune of some half-starved poet in Grub-street.

Near the door of the hut, and exactly on the spot where he had been left by Howel in charge of his glove, lay Tywysog.

"Poor fellow!" said Eva, stooping down

to pat him, "few will miss your master more than you will."

"I shall leave him under your care, dear Eva; he loves you almost as well as he does me, and in a very short time will be quite happy at Plas Conway; but remember, he must have plenty of exercise."

Tywysog looked at his master whilst he was speaking, with such an expression of intelligence in his eyes, that it required no great effort of imagination to suppose that he understood what he said; he licked the hand of Eva as if in token of allegiance, arched his neck, and bounded by her side down the steep descent. Tywysog was a descendant of the famous Gelert, "Llewelyn's favourite hound," and his pedigree was preserved with almost as much care as that of the Llewelyn's; nor did he in any respect disgrace the noble line whence he sprang, for Howel had been indebted to him on more than one occasion, for his life. Once, when travelling in Shropshire, he had been attacked by two armed

ruffians, and "fearful odds were against him cast;" Tywysog had come to his rescue by flying at the throat of one of his assailants, which so greatly alarmed his companion that he instantly made off, leaving Howel to follow his example, which he was by no means slow in doing. On another occasion, when in the depth of winter Howel had fallen on a slippery rock in a desolate spot, at a distance from his home, and injured his ankle so severely as to prevent his rising from the rock, Tywysog had hastily left him, and ran home at a speed that led those who saw him returning to imagine that he was coursing a hare.

After he had gained admittance into the hall, he whined and howled till he attracted the attention of Mr. Llewelyn; he then ran towards the door, and when he found that he was not followed, whined and howled more piteously than before. Mr. Llewelyn, on discovering that the dog had returned without his master, became alarmed; and calling for some of the

men-servants to attend him, and guided by the dog who ran before him, set off towards the mountains. The joy of Tywysog on finding that he had made himself understood was unbounded ; he ran forward to a considerable distance, and then returned as if to ascertain that the party were following him. At length he suddenly stopped, and they beheld Howel extended on the frozen ledge of a rock, scarcely daring to hope for succour, and just on the point of giving way to the stupor that was creeping over him, and falling into that sleep from which, in this world, he would "know no waking." No wonder, then, that Tywysog, after exhibiting such proofs of sagacity and affection, should have become a general favourite at the Glyn ; and Eva felt convinced that he would not be allowed to depart with her without considerable opposition being offered on the part of more than one member of the family. But the thoughts of Eva soon wandered from Tywysog to Howel, and to the hint thrown out by Catryn Hên

of his having a secret enemy. Her heart, already sad, felt almost overpowered by this new sorrow, and she walked on without uttering a word ; and at last Howel, finding all his efforts to draw her into conversation unavailing, asked, in a tone of lover-like anxiety, "if she were ill?"

"Oh, no, I am well, quite well ! but," she continued, "dear Howel, there was something in that mysterious remark made by Catryn Hên, about an enemy in your own house, that has made me feel more miserable than even the thought of parting with you to-morrow had previously done."

Eva had determined upon playing her part like a true heroine, or rather stoic, by not shedding a tear ; but nature was too powerful within her, and when Howel attempted to sooth her she burst into tears : certainly a most thoughtless thing to do, when we remember that she had given her pocket-handkerchief to the wounded man. Now, whether Howel offered his to wipe away her tears, or

kissed them off, we are unable to state; but that Eva found that relief from this burst of tears that thousands have experienced when in a state of great excitement, we are able to inform our readers; and by the time she reached the hall Howel had more than half convinced her that no reliance could be placed in any prediction of Catryn Hên's, who was, if not mad, in a state bordering upon it.

When they entered the hall they were more surprised than pleased to find it occupied by persons of both sexes, for they had imagined, at this hour of the day, that it would have been empty; but Mr. Llewelyn, having drank success to his son and his son's friend in large jugs of strong ale, till it was no longer safe to contradict him, had desired Wenefrede and her friends, after they had changed their wet dresses, to come down into the hall and give an account of their adventures; all the ladies visiting at the hall returned with them, and the tale was hardly told when Eva and Howel, followed by Tywysog, entered.

"Turn out that dog!" exclaimed Eleanor, as soon as she perceived him, in a voice of anger, strangely at variance with her usual cold, calm manner.

"Turn out Tywysog! turn out the dog that has twice saved the life of my son, and has just saved my daughter from being frightened out of her senses by an old witch! no, if he goes, I go too," exclaimed Mrs. Llewelyn, roused, even past her endurance, by this unexpected attack on her son's favourite dog. Mr. Llewelyn was trying to look very wise, but it was evident that he had not heard Eleanor's orders, or a retort somewhat less gentle than that of his wife's would have followed.

Eleanor instantly resumed her usual manner, and, with more condescension than sat easily upon her, explained that she bore no ill will towards the dog, but that she had imagined, from the imperfect account that had reached her at the distance at which she stood from Wenefrede, that Tywysog had

been the cause of all the mischief at the hut of Catryn Hên. The real state of the case was speedily spread through the hall, and poor Tywysog appeared more in danger of being smothered with caresses, than of being banished from the society of man to eat his well-earned supper with brute beasts.

The ladies soon left the hall, and their example was followed by such of the gentlemen as were not inclined to sleep away the time till supper should be placed on the table. When the party again assembled, the sleepers gave themselves "a rousing shake," and their protracted after-dinner revels appeared not to have left a trace behind.

There was much noisy mirth at Glyn Llewelyn that night, but little happiness or real pleasure. Poor Wenefrede, though she laughed and smiled, felt much more inclined to cry : her feelings being compounded of sorrow, disappointment, and pique, with a dash of pride. For though Herbert never quitted her side,

and there was a silent tenderness in his manner which expressed the real state of his feelings much more eloquently than words could have done, he never spoke of love, and did not even express a hope that, should he return, he should find her single; and she fancied that he had been trifling with her affections, and that, when once in London, he would soon forget that he had ever known her. Wenefrede loved him with all the folly (as the cold-hearted and worldly-wise, are pleased to term it,) of a first love; and she fancied this evening that, should even an angel fix his habitation on earth and seek her for his bride, she would reject him, and declare that she could never love again. Yet pride, of which, in common with her family, she possessed a considerable share, dried up the tears that started into her eyes, and induced her to stand up and dance with young Owen of Han Carnedd, to the no small horror and surprise of Herbert; and by so doing she prevented his speak-

ing to her during the remainder of the night.

"She does not love me—you have deceived me," said Herbert, in a voice of extreme bitterness, to Eleanor; as Wenefrede, with a gaiety that any eyes but the jaundiced ones of a jealous lover might have discovered to be assumed, danced past them.

"I am not in the habit of having my word called in question, sir," said Eleanor, in a freezing tone, "nor should I wish a sister of mine to sit moping like a love-sick maiden by the side even of a prince, if she were not his affianced bride."

"True, most true. I beg your pardon, Miss Llewelyn; I spoke hastily and under much irritation of spirit: for what can your sister think of me? why what can she think, but that I am a scoundrel. Oh! may I not tell her how I am situated, without claiming any promise from her of which her father might not approve?"

"No, Mr. Gladstone, that cannot be; but

trust your cause in my hands, and all will be well. I have not yet had an opportunity of mentioning any part of our conversation of this evening to her; it is therefore no wonder that she has left the side of one who can appear to her in no light but that of a heartless deceiver." After uttering this most agreeable and soothing opinion, she left him to his own reflections; which did not appear to be of a pleasing nature, for he muttered to himself,—

"And upon my word it is a most honourable light to appear in!"

Nor was Howel, though from a widely different cause, more a subject of envy than Herbert Gladstone; for hosts of distant cousins or friends were constantly crowding around him, uttering kind wishes for his future happiness, or lamentations at his approaching departure, and his time was so completely engrossed, that he could neither talk nor dance with Eva. The dancing ceased at last, and was followed by an extempore farewell to

Howel, which was sung to the harp. Now in this farewell it was modestly inferred, that Howel Llewelyn was likely to bid the once famous Griffith ap Rhys, "the light, honour, and prop, of South Wales," "to hide his diminished head;" and the modesty of the composer "oozing out at his fingers' ends," he assured his auditors, in the last stanza, that to be an inhabitant of North Wales, conferred greater glory on a man, than to be called "the light, honour, and prop, of South Wales." This patriotic sentiment called forth deafening applause from the gentlemen, and a simultaneous waving of handkerchiefs on the part of the ladies; and Herbert, who was out of humour with himself, and consequently with all around him, addressing himself to Eva, said,—

"Did you ever hear such a confounded noise in your life? I verily believe all the company are going mad."

Howel bade his friends farewell, in stanzas so completely "warm from the heart, and to

the heart addressed," that the ladies could not this time offend Herbert by waving their handkerchiefs, for they required them to wipe away their tears; neither were his ears annoyed by a clapping of hands on the part of the gentlemen, for when the heart is forcibly touched, it does not give utterance to its feelings either by words or sounds.

This farewell from Howel was considered as a signal to the guests to depart; some silently pressed his hand as they left the hall, others begged God to bless him, whilst old veterans shook him heartily by the hand, and, with a loud laugh, bade him beware of the three perils of man, "war, women, and wine."

It was long past midnight, and all the inmates at the hall had retired, if not to rest, to their chambers, when the door of Wenefrede's room slowly opened, and Eleanor walked out: she had explained to Wenefrede that Herbert was not entirely his own master, or he would have offered her his hand and heart that evening. Wenefrede listened with tears in

her eyes, but they were tears of joy; and Eleanor left her in as happy a state of mind as a very young girl who was to part with her lover on the morrow, for an indefinite time, could reasonably be expected to be. But although Eleanor had succeeded in removing a heavy weight from the heart of her sister, her own was evidently far from light: she knit her brows as if in deep thought; sighed heavily, and fixed her eyes on the ground; and though she walked slowly down the passage, the dignity of manner that was in general so conspicuous in all her movements, was wanting: all thought of self appeared to be lost in some all-absorbing subject. When she reached her bed-room door she paused, and then advancing to a recessed window that faced it, she gazed out for an instant on the calm, pale, moonlight scene that lay spread below her; but she probably saw it not, for she hastily turned away, and, shading her eyes with her hand, continued to stand for some time lost in thought.

At length, in a low but decided voice, she exclaimed,—

“It shall be done!—but who shall I employ to do the deed?”

She opened the door of her bed-room somewhat suddenly, and the noise made by the turning of the lock roused from her slumbers a waiting maid; who started up in haste from a large tapestry-covered arm-chair, in which, having got tired waiting for her mistress, she had thrown herself, and, without intending anything of the kind, had dropped asleep. No apology was offered to her haughty mistress for having been found napping, nor did any appear to be expected; but at the same time it was evident that none of that familiarity which old servants regard as one of their perquisites was permitted her. Not a word was spoken by mistress or maid whilst the tedious ceremony of undressing the former was going on; and even more tedious “than a *thrice* told tale,” was this ceremony for Eleanor expected as much attention, and

was as helpless, as any eastern queen, and neither removed a pin nor unfastened a string for herself. Eleanor's waiting-maid was her foster-sister; they had been brought up in the same house, and for many years had slept in the same bed: for after Eleanor had been weaned and taken back to the hall, her foster-sister, Jane Pierce, had accompanied her and had resided there, and been regarded as a member of the family ever since. Jane Pierce had ingratiated herself so much into the good graces of the late Mrs. Llewelyn, that she had been left an annuity that would have enabled her to live in comfort in a house of her own; but she refused to quit her young mistress. Some of the servants, with whom she was no favourite, insinuated that love of money had quite as much to do with this determination as love for her young mistress; be that as it may, if any person really felt affection for Eleanor at that period, it was Jane Pierce. In person Jane was far from prepossessing, nor were her manners

of the most engaging kind : taciturn to repulsiveness, she, nevertheless, took a strange pleasure, in delivering, with Chinese exactness, long scolding messages sent by her mistress, through her, to any luckless servant who had not attended strictly to some arbitrary order.

Eleanor had selected for her sleeping room an apartment which—from its sides being formed of dark wainscot, and its high, narrow, and thickly mullioned windows—wore a gloomy aspect even when “the gladsome beams of day” fell full upon it ; and when viewed, as on this occasion, by the light of the solitary lamp which burned on the toilet table, a feeling of awe might have filled the mind of the least superstitious of beings. The silvery rays of the moon, streaming through the uncurtained windows, served but to render the grim, savage-looking portraits of Eleanor’s warlike ancestors dressed in black suits of mail, which hung in one long line against the walls, doubly grim ; and even the bed, which stood in a deep recess, wore a solemn aspect.

This bed had been presented to a Llewelyn, by Queen Elizabeth, and was loaded with the carving that was so highly prized during her reign: it was square in form, with oak pillars of beautiful and curious workmanship. The head-piece was loaded with ornaments, many of which were strikingly beautiful, and in the centre, in high bas-relief, might be seen the arms of the Llewelyns. The coverlid, ancient as the bed, was formed of large squares of black and crimson cloth, with a deep fringe of gold around it.

As motionless and silent as her ancestors on the walls, sat Eleanor, before an antique looking-glass with an oval silver frame, whilst behind her stood Jane Pierce, busily engaged in combing out her mistress's luxuriant dark hair. Ten minutes passed away and not a word had been uttered by mistress or maid: when Eleanor struck her clasped fist suddenly on the dressing table, and exclaimed, in a voice that admitted of no dispute,—

“That dog must die!”

Jane Pierce did not start as hundreds, nay thousands of waiting maids would have done, or eagerly ask "what dog must die?" no, she continued brushing her mistress's hair as composedly as if the long silence had remained still unbroken. But when Eleanor suddenly started up and turned upon her a face of suppressed rage, whilst her dark hair floated around her like a dismal cloak, her eyes flashed with passion, and her lips and cheeks wore an ashy hue, even the apathetic Jane Pierce was startled: but she did not speak, and Eleanor had again to repeat, "That dog must die!" before she condescended to ask "What dog?"

"Tywysog!" replied Eleanor, fiercely. "Have you not heard what happened at the hut of Catryn Hên this evening? and need I trouble myself to tell you that means must speedily be taken to appease the horrid old witch, or her curses may bring ruin upon us all? Here is a purse well filled with gold: you must take it to her to-morrow night, when no

one can see you, and tell her at the same time that you have given poison to Tywysog, and that in a few hours her wrongs will have been avenged by his death. I will mix a strong poison for you early to-morrow morning, and will watch for a favourable opportunity for your giving it to him."

"I poison Tywysog!" replied Jane Pierce, in a calm deliberate manner, and fixing a searching look upon Eleanor—"I poison Tywysog, madam! no, I would rather poison myself!

"Fool!" muttered Eleanor. But she knew well the disposition she had to deal with, and, that if she intended carrying her point, she must condescend to expostulate, so, in a gentle tone she said,—

"Jane Pierce, do you think that Griffith the huntsman is guilty of a crime when he hangs an ugly or refractory hound?"

"None in the world, madam," replied Jane, "and Griffith may hang, drown, or poison all the dogs about the place, for anything that I care, provided he does not touch Tywysog.

But, if the dog must die, why do not you, madam, ask Griffith the huntsman to hang him for you? for, come what may, I will have nothing to do with his death."

"And should I ask Griffith to hang him," replied Eleanor, with a sneer that might have excited the envy of a fiend, "he would probably answer me in even a less courteous manner than you have done; and, instead of informing me that he would rather hang himself, might tell me I might kill the dog myself."

"Oh! well, indeed, and I should not be surprised if he did," said Jane: who, having once stepped over the barrier that separated her from her haughty mistress, appeared to have lost all fear of her.

Eleanor did not deem it advisable to notice this answer, and sat for some minutes with her cheek resting upon her hand apparently in deep thought; at length she turned suddenly round, and, fixing her eyes upon Jane, demanded why she would spare the life of Tywysog, when she

did not appear to have any affection for dogs in general.

"Well, indeed, madam, because he loves me, and there are few things in this world that do: and besides, he is my young master's favourite dog."

"Your young master's favourite dog!" retorted Eleanor, fixing her eyes, in which every evil passion seemed to be concentrated, full upon Jane. "Jane Pierce you have no master or mistress in this house but me; but from the little respect you appear inclined to pay to my orders, I suspect that circumstance has quite escaped your memory. I have no further occasion for your services: you may go to bed."

Jane Pierce laid the dress she held in her hand carefully and very slowly in its usual place, courtesied to Eleanor, and, with a deliberate step walked down the room; she had nearly reached the door, when Eleanor called her by name, and asked if she were determined not to obey her orders?

"I will not poison Tywysog," replied Jane, doggedly.

"Then," answered Eleanor, "I will."

Jane on hearing this, started, for the first time during their conference: with a look of alarm she approached her mistress, and almost in a whisper, but at the same time in a most decided tone, exclaimed,—

"No, that must not be; suppose it should be discovered that you had done it. Oh! I could not bear to live and hear you called to account for having killed that dog: I would a hundred times rather do it myself; and take all the blame, should we be detected."

"Very well," said Eleanor in an altered tone; "I will have the poison prepared by to-morrow morning, and you may give it to him without the least fear of detection; for Howel's departure will occasion so much grief and confusion that no one will think about his dog. Tywysog, you say, is fond of you: entice him to some lonely spot, wait till you

see the poison is beginning to take effect, and then leave him; and, even should he be missed, it will be conjectured that he has followed his master to Conway."

Jane Pierce's lips moved, but she did not utter a syllable; and, turning hastily away, she quitted the room. Mistress and maid parted mutually dissatisfied. Eleanor sat lost in thought, till the first rays of morning, streaming in through an eastern window, warned her to retire to rest, and, as she lay down in her bed, she exclaimed,—

"I have no dislike to Tywysog, but I am in the power of that old fiend Catryn Hên, and to appease her the life of the dog must be sacrificed."

And what was the nature of Jane Pierce's reflections when she found herself in her low and miserably furnished bed-room? Judging from outward signs, they were not one jot more enviable than those of her mistress: for tears rolled down her cheeks, and at length she exclaimed, in great bitterness of spirit,

clasping her hands at the same time most vehemently together,—

“Heaven only knows where this may end! for should I murder the dog, may not my mistress, at some future day or other, ask me to murder a human being, should one cross her in her path?”

The lamp which Jane Pierce had brought with her had burned out, scarcely a glimmer of light found its way through the small latticed window that was placed in the sloping roof, and all around her looked as gloomy as her own thoughts. She was on the point of throwing herself, without undressing, on her bed, when she was startled by hearing a deep sigh, which seemed to ascend from the floor; and, looking towards it, she thought she could perceive a large dark looking figure at a short distance from her feet. She uttered a faint shriek; and one of her hands falling by her side, it came in contact with a substance that felt nearly as cold as marble, but before she had time to utter another scream,

she felt her hand licked by the tongue of a dog.

"Tywysog!" she exclaimed in a joyful voice; "and was it your cold nose that I fancied was something unearthly?"

Jane now remembered that she had seen him lying at his master's door as she went down the passage to her mistress's room, and that, occupied as her thoughts were on her return, he had probably followed her unperceived.

"Tywysog!" she again repeated, and the dog jumped around her and again licked her hand. After spending some time in caressing him and receiving his caresses, she at last threw herself on a bed that a kitchen-maid of the present day would refuse to sleep upon; and Tywysog, unreprieved, stretched himself in happy indolence at her feet,

"Poor dog!" said Jane, dashing away the tears that filled her eyes: "no, I cannot, I will not poison you!—I will leave my mistress; whom, with all her faults, I love in my heart:

I will leave the hall which has been my home for six-and-thirty years: I will leave everything that I love, or that loves me, sooner than I will injure a hair of his head. Oh! I will go to Catryn Hén, and offer her gold if she will beg for his life: and—but I know not why—my mistress dare not refuse any request of hers.”

With this determination strongly impressed on her mind, she fell asleep; but her waking thoughts haunted her slumbers, and mingled together in strange confusion in her dreams. She imagined she saw Tywysog writhing in agony at her feet; then he suddenly started up, and was coursing a hare, which ran towards her bed, and rising on its hind legs, suddenly changed into the figure of her mistress: who grasped her by the arm, and fiercely demanded why she had poisoned her?

“Oh, I did not, I did not!” she attempted to exclaim. The effort awoke her: she started up and looked around her with a terrified glance; and even when she became convinced

that her mistress was not by her bed-side, it was several minutes before she could bring herself to believe, " 't was but a dream." The watchful Tywysog seemed instantly to comprehend that all was not right, and, springing from the foot of the bed, ran round to Jane Pierce and rubbed his head against her hand. This action instantly recalled to her mind all that had passed respecting him between her and her mistress; and after bestowing a pat or two on his rough head, she jumped off her bed, tied on her hat, cautiously opened the door of her room, and walked with a noiseless step down the winding narrow stairs that led from the second story to the long gallery in which the principal sleeping rooms were situated.

Tywysog followed close at her heels. At the door of Wenefrede's room she stopped: Eva also occupied it, and with her Jane felt that Tywysog would be safe till she returned. The night had been sultry, and the door, to admit a little air, had been left ajar; and Tywysog, who

was in the habit of paying visits to the fair inmates, easily insinuated himself through the opening, and Jane Pierce softly closed the door upon him. Torture would not have wrung from Jane Pierce a confession of her mistress's diabolical design; and she was anxious that it should appear as if the dog had accidentally strayed into the room, she, therefore, quickly and silently left the gallery. But softly as the door was closed, it was heard by Eva, who had not long been asleep; and who, had she followed the rules generally observed by heroines on such occasions, would not have closed her eyes that night. Wenefrede had cried herself to sleep, and Eva had, unconsciously, followed her example. Tywysog was always welcome, and his appearance on the present occasion, though at an earlier hour than usual, did not excite her surprise. Had Eva but known the jeopardy in which Tywysog's life was placed, Jane Pierce would not have walked alone to the hut of the witch; but in happy ignorance of the wicked de-

signs of Eleanor against him, Eva laid her hand on his head, and once more closed her weary eyes. Jane Pierce was, in the mean time, walking as rapidly as the steep approach would allow of her doing, to the hut of Catryn Hén.

CHAPTER IV.

And whether we shall meet again I know not,—
Therefore our everlasting farewell take ;
For ever, and for ever, farewell Cassius !
If we do meet again—why, we shall smile ;
If not, why then this parting was well made.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

SOME of the servants who were busily employed laying out the breakfast on the high table, early in the morning, were startled by the sudden opening of the outer door, which was thrown back as wide as if royalty was to pass through it, and then closed with a clap that seemed not only to shake the hall, but the whole house ; but their surprise changed speedily to fright, when in the early visitor who was walking slowly up the hall,

they recognised Catryn Hên: with a simultaneous scream of horror, they prepared to rush out at a side door, when they were arrested by the shrill angry voice of Catryn, calling to them to stop.

“Fools! idiots! where are you running to? Do you suppose, if I wished to harm you, that I could not do it just as easily when your backs are turned as, at this instant, when your ugly eyes are fixed upon me with a stare that nearly brings them out of your heads, and your great mouths are standing as wide open as if you were going to swallow me? Why I want nothing with you, you blockheads! except that the least of a simpleton amongst you would show me the way to Miss Llewelyn's bed-chamber.”

Some whispering and pushing ensued amongst the terrified servants, each anxious to persuade his or her neighbour to undertake a task they were unwilling to perform. Catryn, whose stock of patience was but small, angrily repeated her commands: striking, at the same

time, the stone pavement of the hall with the long staff she carried in her hand, with a force that startled anew the servants, who were huddled together in a distant corner. This second summons induced a bare-headed, and in other respects very scantily-attired, rosy-cheeked damsel, to come forward and offer to show Catryn the way.

Catryn followed her in perfect silence up the grand, slippery, oak staircase ; and unaccustomed to polished floors, she would, had she not contrived to balance herself with her long staff, have fallen more than once, for she disdained to cling to the banisters. When they reached Eleanor's bed-room door, the guide stopped, and assured Catryn she dared not open it without first asking leave from Jane Pierce.

"Well, and who asked you to open the door, you trembling goose!" demanded Catryn, with a sneer; "not I, for your company is the last thing I wish for: so now go down, and tell those fools in the hall that Catryn the

witch prophesies that you will never be married"—she paused, and then added, with an inward chuckle that drowned her words, "till some fool likes your looks better than I do."

The poor girl, who was too much alarmed by the commencement of the prophecy to wait for the conclusion, had slidden at a rapid pace over the ice-like floor, and was at the head of the stair-case before it was finished; and, rushing into the hall, she declared that she had shown Catryn Hên up stairs, but that no earthly power should induce her to show her down again, and that to her dying day she would never more, willingly, encounter her looks; but of the witch's prophecy she said not a word.

Slowly, but without any attempt at secrecy, Catryn turned the handle of the door of Eleanor's room, and walked with anything but a noiseless step up to the recess in which stood the bed. Eleanor, after many hours of wakefulness, had at length fallen into

a deep though unrefreshing sleep, from which the noise occasioned by Catryn's wooden shoes failed to awake her. Catryn stood by the side of the bed, looking at her for many minutes, in perfect silence. Want of rest, and anxiety of mind, had given to Eleanor's naturally colourless cheeks the hue of death; and her thin tall figure stretched out to its utmost length, with her pale thin hands clasped on her breast, led Catryn to imagine that she was looking upon a corpse; and she was on the point of stooping down and listening, to ascertain if Eleanor still breathed, when a violent knitting of the brow, a sudden unclosing of the clasped hands, and a low muttering sound, which came forth from the thin, parched, and colourless lips, convinced Catryn that she was gazing on a living being.

"She is alive;" exclaimed Catryn, "but it would be better for her if she were dead. I know her well: she has an evil spirit in her heart, that will never let her rest till it has urged her on to commit some crime or other.

I hate her. Oh! it is strange that the wicked should hate the wicked; but the first piece of gold I ever received was given by her hand, and for that I thank her: and for that I will try and save her from everlasting misery."

A violent contortion of all her limbs seized Eleanor at this instant; she grasped with violence the deep frills of her nightcap, and uttering a long, low sigh, suddenly awoke. Disagreeable as probably had been the objects that had met her eyes in slumber, the living object they fell upon on awaking was ten times more appalling; for they fell upon the unusually tall figure of Catryn Hén—which, judging from its stiff stateliness, time had no power to bend—standing by the side of her bed, with her keen gray eyes fixed upon her in evident displeasure. Eleanor started up in her bed, and, almost unconscious of what she was saying, exclaimed,—

"Oh! where is my purse? I will give you money—anything you like to ask for—the dog—the dog—that horrid dog is dead!"

"The dog is alive and well; and if you, Miss Llewelyn, injure a hair of his head: proud, powerful, and rich though you be, the lowly, poor, and friendless Catryn Hên will humble you to the dust."

Eleanor was busily engaged in hunting for her purse, and the impression made upon her countenance by this speech could not be ascertained by Catryn, her head being averted. But at length Eleanor looked at Catryn, and, with well-assumed calmness, assured the witch that she should be delighted to spare the life of Tywysog, who was a great favourite of hers; and that it had cost her much pain being obliged to condemn him to death, but that she had hoped by so doing to avert Catryn's anger from her innocent sister and the rest of her family. "But," said Eleanor, "hold out your hand, Catryn, and I will empty the gold out of this purse into it: that can harm no one."

"Yes," replied Catryn, pushing hastily from her the tempting bribe, "it can harm me; and

I will not take it. I know you too well, Miss Llewelyn, to suppose that it is offered out of good-will to me. No, no; you will require good interest for your money: the interest I have paid you already for gold received, sits like a heavy weight upon my soul, and I fear that should I take more from you, this would weigh it down to hell."

"I have heard," retorted Eleanor, whilst her lips curled with a sneer, "that the devil can quote Scripture, so I need not be astonished at receiving a lecture from a witch; but as I offer you the gold as a gift, and ask no services in return, in my poor judgment it cannot possibly do harm to your soul."

"But you fear me, and, consequently, you hate me; and I know well that you would see me starve at your feet sooner than give it me, if you did not intend asking some heavy interest on it from me at no distant day."

Eleanor, with a faint smile, held up Catryn's apron, and emptying the despised gold into it said, "Yes, you are right: I do require a

very important service from you ; and one that many women would consider but poorly requited by such a paltry sum as this. I require you never to name to a living creature my intention of poisoning Tywysog."

The gold looked very tempting, and Catryn's keen gray eyes glanced quickly from it to Eleanor, and then back to the gold Eleanor was strongly urging her to take.

"Well, indeed, I see I must take it," said Catryn, with a sigh ; "but I fear it will do me more harm than good."

When the gold was safely deposited in a large pocket, Catryn said, "Had you not given me a farthing I should have held my tongue about the dog ; not for any love I bear to you, but for the sake of your father, who saved me many years ago from being sent to gaol for a witch."

Eleanor now became extremely anxious to get rid of her companion, fearing the length of her visit might excite surprise in the family, and lead to inquiries that it would not be easy

to satisfy; so, after giving sundry hints that were not taken, she was obliged to suggest that the wounded man might be in want of his grandmother's assistance, and that it would be better for her to depart.

"Well, indeed, and so perhaps it will," said Catryn; "not but that he will be well taken care of in my absence, for Jane Pierce, who came up to my hut very early this morning to tell me that you had ordered her to poison Tywysog, offered to sit by his bed-side till I came back, and I know of no woman but her in North Wales that would have had the courage to sit alone in the hut of Catryn Hên, and watching by the side of one who looks for all the world like a corpse: for his wounds made him feverish and restless, so I gave him a drug that soon sent him to sleep, and he lies so still and breathes so low, that you must put your ear close to him to hear him breathe at all, and loss of blood has made him look as pale as if he were dead."

"Pray hasten back to him," exclaimed

Eleanor, with well-acted anxiety in her manner; "for should he awake in your absence and find only a stranger in the hut, he might be greatly alarmed and distressed."

"Oh! there is no fear of his waking; I have taken good care that his sleep should be a long one," answered Catryn.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Eleanor, in a tone of horror; "you do not mean to say that you have given him a drug that will cause him to sleep for ever?"

Catryn stepped towards the bed, with her right hand extended and her eyes flashing fire, feeling that she could, with pleasure, have seized Eleanor by the throat and put it out of her power to utter such dreadful words again; but Eleanor, startled by her looks and gestures, had retreated to the other side of the bed, out of the reach of her threatening arm. Catryn, however, darted a look at her which was gall and wormwood to her proud spirit, and demanded fiercely,—

"If she did not suppose that the life of

her son was a thousand times more precious in her sight, than that of any other living thing? And yet have I not, to save the life of a dog," she asked in a shrill voice, "left my hut, that I thought never to have left again till the Evil One came for me? Now, I wonder when he does come," she continued, with the cunning look of a maniac, "as we are such near neighbours, if he will call for you at the same time, to save himself the trouble of taking a journey on purpose."

Eleanor felt a cold perspiration stand upon her forehead, and all pulsation of her heart appeared to have ceased; but with the presence of mind for which she was justly celebrated, she asked Catryn in what way she thought it most likely that they should travel to the regions below.

"Well now, that's a very droll thought of yours: I never heard anything so droll: why I have thought scores of times about going, but whether I should walk or ride there never came into my head."

"I hope we shall go in the winter," said Eleanor.

Catryn laughed long and loud at this remark; but she was evidently growing more calm, and Eleanor talked with her, till at length she quitted the room in even a more rational state of mind than when she had entered it. Catryn required no one to show her the way to the hall; and fortunate was it that such was the case, for men and maids, of whom not a few were at this instant busily engaged in the gallery, cording trunks, &c., no sooner perceived her coming out of Eleanor's room, than, like sheep alarmed by the glimpse of a strange dog, they set off in a compact body, and, without casting a look behind them, took refuge in an unoccupied chamber; while, unattended and unannounced, Catryn Hên entered the hall, to the no small astonishment of the party already assembled there.

"Why, Catryn Hên!" exclaimed Mr. Llewelyn, "can it really be you? You confounded old fool! what can have brought you

here? Don't you know that if I did my duty as a justice of the peace, I should send you to prison, and order you to be burned afterwards for a witch? But well, well, you are bad enough, I believe; but as it is (if my memory does not deceive me) near upon twenty years since you were last in this hall, I suppose I must ask you to sit down and take a bowl of flummery."

"Or, perhaps," suggested Howel, "a horn of ale would be better to drink a prosperous journey to me in; what say you, Catryn Hên?"

"Why, that I think you a wiser man than your father; for you know much better than he does what is good for an old woman who has not been in bed the live-long night, and feels more tired with her morning's walk than she would have done twenty years back."

So saying, she seated herself on a chair pushed towards her by Howel, and with evident satisfaction drank off her ale.

"It is twenty years since I last heard the

sound of the harp," she said, casting a wishful glance towards the one in the hall.

"Roderic play the poor old woman a tune," whispered Howel.

Now Roderic, was very miserable at the idea of parting with his young master, declaring that he was much too old ever to expect to see him again; sorrow had made him irritable, and though it was Howel who made the request, he muttered something about playing for a worthless old witch. After a great deal more tuning than the harp stood in need of, the old man to the great discomfort of all present, and particularly of Howel—began to play a funeral dirge, and accompanied it with a low melancholy chant. It has been remarked that on some particular subject all the world are mad; and that with Catryn Hên death was that subject could not admit of a doubt; for no sooner did she catch the nature of the words Roderic was chanting, than she most vehemently called upon him to stop: declaring she was not dead, nor had

she invited any of the persons present to her funeral. "And," she added, "I am determined that they shall not have any hot ale or funeral bread;" and she seized a jug of ale and drained it to the last drop, and emptying a large plate of oat-cakes into her apron, slowly and triumphantly walked out of the hall: the door having been thrown open to facilitate her departure.

"What could have brought that dreadful old woman here?" exclaimed Mrs. Llewelyn; "I never saw her but once before in my life, and I pray fervently that I may never set eyes on her again. Indeed, my dear," she continued, addressing herself to Mr. Llewelyn, "you are to blame for encouraging her to come here; I can assure you, she has nearly frightened me out of my senses."

"My love, I am happy to hear that you have any senses to be frightened out of," said Mr. Llewelyn, laughing, and giving his wife a kiss that sounded through the lofty hall; "but as to the charge of my encouraging that

old jade to come here, I deny it *in toto*. I suppose, like the rest of his acquaintance, that she came to take leave of Howel, with whom she appears to be on very free and easy terms."

"We are very old acquaintances," replied Howel, smiling; "but I do not take all the honour of her visit to myself; I suspect I must share it with Eva, who promised her some fine linen, which she stood in need of to form a bandage for her wounded grandson: and which was not taken to her last night, not a servant here possessing sufficient courage to visit her hut after nightfall."

"I am very glad Wenefrede had not come down, or, the old hag would probably have cursed the poor child again," exclaimed Mrs. Llewelyn.

"Bless me! I had forgotten that business, or I would have seen the old jade starving before I would have offered her a share of my breakfast," exclaimed Mr. Llewelyn; "but perhaps," he added, with a loud laugh, "it

may, after all, be a good thing to have a friend at court: and I take it this old lady is the old gentleman's ambassadress for North Wales."

"Indeed, sir," observed Herbert, "I am astonished at your treating the business so lightly; the old woman richly deserved to be sent to jail, for alarming your daughter in the way she did yesterday: I can assure you that I was just on the point of seizing her by the shoulders, and thrusting her out of the hall."

"And a most heroic commencement it would have been to your military career," said Eva, with a smile that annoyed Herbert more than he would willingly have confessed. "But you know little, my dear cousin, of the feelings of the lower class in Wales," she observed, "or you would be aware that had Mr. Llewelyn desired one of his servants to turn Catryn Hên out of the hall, they would not have dared to touch her; and as to your scheme of sending her off to jail, it could not have

been managed unless you had volunteered to take her there yourself: and much in character would your dress have been with your business," observed Eva, as she cast a sly glance at Herbert's magnificent riding dress.

This last remark nettled Herbert, and he answered somewhat tartly, that "notwithstanding all the numberless charms a residence in Wales had to offer, he should, nevertheless, be inclined to prefer one in England, where serving men did not dare to disobey the commands of their masters." Mr. Llewelyn, who considered the slightest disparaging allusion to North Wales as a personal insult, was about to reply with considerable warmth; but fortunately the flummery he was eating proved even hotter than his temper, and the fear of burning his throat kept him silent. Eleanor and Wenefrede, at this instant entered the hall, and the conversation took a different turn. There was much rambling chat carried on during breakfast, every one present seeming to fear that a pause would be taken

advantage of by the travellers, and that they would rise to depart. At length the dreaded moment could be no longer delayed: Howel sprang from his seat, and held out his hand to his father, then dropped on his knees, and begged a parting blessing. With all the warmth of an affectionate father's love, was the "God bless you, my son," uttered by Mr. Llewelyn; and the tears were fast gathering in his eyes, when, ashamed of exhibiting such unusual emotion, not only before his own family but the whole of his household, who had by this time assembled to take a last look at their dear, young master, he, in a hasty tone, desired Howel to get up, and not make a fool of him any longer. Servants at this period would have considered themselves very ill used, had they not been allowed to sorrow with their masters and mistresses when they sorrowed, or to rejoice with them when they rejoiced. Poor Mrs. Llewelyn, in an agony of grief, threw herself into the arms of her son; and all the pieces of good advice which she

had reserved till the parting moment—thinking that, as last words, their effect would be the greater—were forgotten. Eva was to accompany the travellers to Conway, where they intended to pass the night, in order that they might take leave of Mrs. Wynn; who had been on a visit to one of her daughters, and had not been able to reach Glyn Llewelyn in time to join the party of the previous day. This arrangement was particularly agreeable to Eva, who had looked forward to this public leave taking with Howel, as a great aggravation of her sorrow. Eleanor received Howel's parting kiss with her usual calm indifference; but, just as he was relinquishing her hand, Tywysog, who had been called by Eva, bounded between them, and Eleanor with a faint ejaculation of horror, started back.

"Is it possible Eleanor," asked Howel, looking at her with astonishment, "that you can be afraid of my dog?"

"No, I have no fear of the dog," replied Eleanor, in a voice so low as to be heard by

no one but Howel; "but I fear much the mischief he may bring upon Wenefrede. Catryn Hên was never known to forgive an injury; and, mark my words, she will revenge on Wenefrede, the one she has received through that dog."

"Nonsense, Eleanor, I will stake anything you please that Catryn will not molest Wenefrede in any way; and as for the poor culprit Tywysog, he goes with us, and, most probably, will never return to disturb either you or Catryn with his presence. And now, Eleanor, God bless you, and let all by-gones be by-gones." A squeeze of the hand, much more in accordance with the warmth of Howel's heart than with Eleanor's dignity, was given; but she was too busily engaged in examining a finger cut by a ring, to utter an amen to Howel's wish.

Wenefrede wept and sobbed like a child, and clung to her brother with a most distressing tenacity; at length Mr. Llewelyn seized her by the arm, and desired her to go to

her own room, and not expose herself in that way before all the servants. Accustomed to obey the slightest commands of her father, the poor girl slowly and sadly quitted the hall; her ready compliance instantly mollified Mr. Llewelyn, and looking after her with fond affection, he exclaimed,—

“She is but a child in years, and I who am well stricken in them, have acted as if I were but an infant; so why should I find fault with her poor thing?—poor thing! there, call her back, Eleanor: no wonder she should feel this parting with her brother.”

How or where Wenefrede took leave of Herbert was never clearly ascertained; though somebody said to somebody that they thought they saw Master Gladstone and Miss Wenefrede standing in one of the bay windows of the hall, and that Miss Wenefrede was crying, and that he gave her a kiss, and then ran out of the hall and mounted his horse. We doubt whether the successful candidate at a contested election had ever more hands to shake, in

a given space, than had Howel on his way out of the hall ; and much grumbling and pushing was to be heard and seen amongst the inferior domestics and farm servants, who were kept in the back ground by those in authority, and more than one not remarkably clean-looking hand was thrust forward for the honour of a shake, though neither the head nor body of the owner of it was visible. As Howel approached the outer gate, he began to breathe more freely, and exclaimed,—

“Thank Heaven, these dreadful leave-takings are over for to-day.” But he was mistaken ; for at his horse’s head stood Roderic, who was determined to hear the last sound of his dear young master’s voice, and to catch the last glance of his figure. And no bad subject for a painter did the venerable, grey-headed harper, and the gaily caparisoned charger present : the charger, like the war-horse in Job, “pawed in the valley, and rejoiced in his strength ;” whilst the harper, oppressed with age and grief, seemed to tremble

under a gust of wind that swept down the vale.

"Put on your hat, Roderic;" said Howel, in a soothing voice, "and take care of your health, or you will not be able to play a tune in honour of my first victory."

"Give me my own way, and the harp shall never sound again in your father's hall till it sounds your welcome back to it; and that welcome will be played by a younger and, may be, a more skilful hand than mine.—I am looking in your face for the last time:—my days, I feel, will shortly be numbered.—The God of all mercy preserve you from sin and sorrow!"

He turned quickly away, but the tears were seen chasing each other down his wan and furrowed cheeks, as, slowly and with uneven steps, he retraced his way to the hall.

Partings such as these were not calculated to raise the spirits of the travellers: Eva drew her riding hood closer over her face, partly to protect it from the sun, and partly to conceal

her tears, which began to fall at the sight of poor old Roderic's.

Sadly and slowly, the party took their way down the Glyn; the servants, as long as a glimpse of the hall, or any of its numerous out-buildings, could be obtained, turning round and casting "longing, lingering looks" behind. At length a sudden bend in the road shut out the old hall, and every building connected with it. Howel sighed deeply, and it appeared to be a contagious sigh, for it was echoed by all the party; but one of the attendants, John Jones by name, appeared determined not to be out-sighed by master or man, and uttered a deep sepulchral groan, and then exclaimed,—

"Oh, dear! and well now what will become of us amongst those thieves and cut-throats in London? And, man alive, when we are once out of Cheshire, why we shall all be starved; for Jinking Hughes has been telling me that not a drop of butter-milk fit for a christian to drink shall we get, and that he never saw a bowl

of flummery all the time he was fighting in the English wars."

There was something so ludicrous in the woeful looks and deep groans with which John Jones accompanied this speech, that Eva could not refrain from smiling, and, fearing her smile might increase to a laugh, she rode forward, lest it should give offence; but these remarks served to change for a time the current of thought of all the party, and they rode on, if not gaily, at least with a greater appearance of cheerfulness. As they approached the fearful road that was to carry them over Penman Maur, they perceived a female figure, respectably dressed, seated on a stone; and long before her features were recognised by any of the party, Tywysog had darted up to her, and been caressed with evident delight; as they came nearer, she arose, and at the same instant Howel and Eva exclaimed, "Jane Pierce! what can have brought her here?"

"My mistress," said Jane Pierce, "sent me

out on a little business very early this morning, and I was afraid, Master Howel, that I should miss seeing you, so I came across the mountains, and have been waiting for you here, to say farewell."

"I asked for you, Jane, before I left home," said Howel, "and felt sorry at not being able to wish you good-bye; but no one seemed to know where you were gone."

"And did you miss me? and did you ask for me? Then God bless you for it," exclaimed Jane, in a voice of deep emotion. "Oh! I had thought no one but my mistress and this poor dog would have missed poor Jane Pierce had she been dead and buried." And a tear glistened in her eyes as she observed, "but this is not the first time that you have shown kindness towards one who can boast of but few friends. Why it was only last week that you took my part against that forward hussy Peggy Lloyd, whom you heard saying—"As for you, Mistress Jane, rich as they say you are, you can't buy your-

self a husband : no, nor will you ever get one unless you spend some of your money in buying a golden mask to hide that rough face of yours'."

"And what did Howel say?" asked Eva, with a slight smile on her lips.

"Why, Miss Wynn, he said, 'Pretty as you may be pleased to think yourself, Peggy, I would recommend Jane Pierce as a wife far before you;' and so little did Peggy like that remark that I have had quietness from her saucy tongue ever since. But," said Jane, her eye glancing eagerly at Tywysog, "I little thought you intended taking that dog with you."

"He will remain at Plas Conway, and you will often see him," replied Howel.

But he misunderstood Jane's feelings on the subject, and imagined that she was regretting instead of rejoicing in the departure of her four-footed friend.

"Oh! take him with you, dear Master Howel: do not leave him at Plas Conway.

Remember what a protection he will be to you in that dreadful England, where they think it no harm to stop travellers and murder them. Oh ! sir, for the sake of your friends, pray take him with you," said Jane, clasping her hands together, and raising them up in a supplicating attitude.

"Surely, Jane, you cannot really feel any alarm for the safety of five well-armed men," replied Howel ; in a kind voice ; "but if his going will add to your happiness, I will promise to take Tywysog with me."

Howel felt particularly obliged to Jane for this proposal, for it was quite in unison with his own wishes ; and his heart was touched by the anxiety manifested for his welfare by one whom he could not recollect ever having addressed him before of her own accord ; so stooping down from his horse, and holding out his hand to her, he said,—

"Jane, remember, should you take it into your head to change your name before I return, that Miss Wynn must choose a

wedding gown for you, and I will pay for it."

"Great thanks, Master Howel; but I have heard it said that a woman who could afford to buy a cow was as well off as she would be had she a husband to keep her by the labour of his hands. Now, as I can afford not only to buy one but four cows, and keep them too, you may depend upon it that I shall not trouble myself with a husband; and you will find me Jane Pierce, return when you will. But that gown will be something to talk about to Peggy Lloyd: oh! she will not like to hear of that gown."

The last sentence in Jane's speech was evidently intended to be a soliloquy.

The bracing mountain air, joined to the fresh breeze from the sea, had a most exhilarating effect upon the travellers, and when they reached Plas Conway but slight traces of the grief occasioned by that sad word, farewell, remained. Old Evan was waiting at the door to receive the welcome guests, but his

rubicund face did not shine so brightly as was its wont, and Eva anxiously asked "If he were well?"

"Him has been bad, very: no possib worse; but him better."

"Did you consult a doctor, Evan?" inquired Herbert.

"What for it go to doctor?" asked Evan, in a tone of surprise. "Got be praised, Welshman too wise trust him life in hands doctor. No, Misses say, Evan him too much blood."

"So, I suppose, you had more faith in a barber than in a doctor," said Herbert, "and got a knight of the basin to bleed you."

"Him was in the fault, him guess wrong: it went to no scratchpole; it went to fine stream it knew off, put in him legs, sat till black leeches, many, came and bite him.—Oh! it do it power of good."

Herbert laughed heartily at this primitive mode of bleeding; but old Evan had his revenge, for he kept him standing a quarter

of an hour, not "by Shrewsbury clock," but by the one in the hall at Plas Conway, whilst he explained all the advantages his method possessed over that "of them there foolish English doctors."

After making his escape at last from the "old man eloquent," Herbert sought out his aunt and stated to her his long list of hopes and fears respecting Wenefrede. It has, we believe, been elsewhere stated that Mrs. Wynn was a most excellent listener, but on the present occasion she laid claim to no praise for being so, her attention being deeply interested in every word uttered by her nephew. It was at length settled that Mrs. Wynn should write to Lady Gladstone, and state, fairly and impartially, her opinion of the advantages likely to arise from a connection with the Llewelyns of Glyn Llewelyn. Mrs. Wynn dwelt but shortly on the beauty and virtues of Wenefrede, but wrote long and eloquently touching the large fortune she would one day probably be mistress of.

When the letter was finished, Mrs. Wynn showed it to Herbert, whose face became crimson on discovering that three lines had been considered sufficient to describe the charms and virtues of one with whose praises he could, he thought, have filled a volume.

“My dear aunt,” he exclaimed, laying down the letter in evident disgust, “you say Wenefrede is remarkably pretty, and that is the only remark you make about her appearance. My mother will picture her as a fair, doll-like, insipid thing, with a clear complexion, flaxen hair, and a light, unmeaning blue eye. Oh! I wish you had allowed me to tell you what to say about her uncommon and fascinating style of beauty; and then you have quite forgotton to say a word about her manners, which are so remarkably innocent and captivating.”

Mrs. Wynn looked at her nephew and smiled, but continued to fold and seal her letter, without adding one syllable to the

praise she had already expressed. Herbert received the packet with a sigh, and a look of dissatisfaction.

"Herbert," said Mrs. Wynn, laying her hand kindly on his arm, "if Wenefrede is ever your wife you will probably have to thank me for it."

Herbert liked *ifs* as little as Richard III., and answered in as impatient a tone as he could have assumed had he been "every inch a king."

"If! and why, madam, should you imagine there could be an *if* in the case?"

"Simply," replied Mrs. Wynn, who strove not to appear unusually calm, having observed that, when persons were a little excited, that extreme composure in those who had called forth their wrath had the same effect as a dry log cast on a hot fire—"simply because I am aware that your parents have other matrimonial views for you."

"Oh yes, I know my mother was very anxious that I should marry Eva; but Eva is

not to be had, so she cannot be a stumbling-block in the way."

"Had Eva been disengaged, you might have found me a stumbling-block in your way, if you had fixed your affections upon her, for I do not approve of first cousins marrying," answered Mrs. Wynn: a faint blush colouring her cheek; for her motherly pride was hurt by the idea of Herbert imagining that but for Eva's engagement to Howel he had only to offer and be accepted. "I was not thinking of Eva when I spoke, but of Lady Mary Grey."

Herbert turned very pale; his parent's predilection and, at no very distant period, his own, for Lady Mary Grey had for many months past been quite forgotten, and he said in a hurried tone, "She is very handsome, but she is poor."

"And Wenefrede will be rich," said Mrs. Wynn with a smile, and Herbert this time smiled also.

Howel had been absent for some time,

giving orders for the journey of the following day, and listening with philosophical patience to all the advice old Evan considered it his duty to bestow upon him; every other sentence ending with "Them be very words dear old master say itself:" though most probably could "dear old master" have heard the words imputed to him, he would have wished to revisit this earth once more, were it only for the satisfaction of giving the lie to his late attendant. When Howel at length returned to the common sitting-room, he found it unoccupied except by Eva, who was standing at a window so deeply engrossed with her own thoughts as to be quite unconscious of his approach.

"I do not offer you a penny for your thoughts, Eva, for I can guess them untold," said Howel.

Eva, who had imagined herself alone in the room, started and coloured, and this little fright brought such a bright bloom into her cheeks that she looked quite lovely: and so,

we suspect, thought Howel ; for, putting his arm round her waist, he gazed in her face with a look of admiration and fondness that only accepted lovers are permitted to indulge in. But such looks are rather difficult to encounter, and Eva cast her eyes on the floor and said,

“Saucy as you look, sir, you are much mistaken if you flatter yourself with the idea that I was thinking of you.”

“Not of me, but of something closely connected with me. Come, I will guess again ; you were thinking of Jane Pierce, and the interest she takes in Tywysog. I have guessed right this time, I see by your smile.”

“Yes,” said Eva, “you have guessed right this time, and I feel convinced by your doing so, that you have thought as much about Jane Pierce’s unaccountable behaviour as I have done.”

“And have you no clue to assist you to unravel the mystery? Most certainly I have none ; for never till this morning,” said

Howel, laughing, "did my vanity prompt me to imagine that I was honoured by the love of Jane Pierce."

"Jane, I suspect," observed Eva, "has reversed the old saw, and loves the master for the sake of his dog. But I would give much to know on what errand Eleanor sent Jane this morning to the hut of Catryn Hên, for to what other spot up in the mountains could she have gone? I have ascertained that the sun had not risen when she left the Hall; and for what reason could Catryn have left her sick grandson, and passed nearly an hour in Eleanor's chamber this morning? Her visit was not, as you fancied, to me; but as I opened the door of my bed-room, I saw her closing that of Eleanor's, and the servants (who were in the gallery, and ran away when they perceived her as if a mad bull had appeared instead of a crazy old woman) told me, when they had a little recovered from their fright, that Catryn Hên had asked for no one but Eleanor."

"'T is strange, 't is passing strange," said Howel: "a puzzle that might have tried the skill of Œdipus. Why, where could Eleanor have become acquainted with Catryn? You must have often heard Eleanor say she trusted that she never should see her calling; her a disgrace to the neighbourhood, and declaring that she and all who consulted her deserved to be burned: and then with what scorn and derision she always treated my dear mother, when she mentioned any anecdote confirming the general belief in Catryn's supernatural powers. Oh! Eleanor is too proud and too wise ever to have consulted Catryn; and you may depend upon it that her early visit of this morning was as unexpected as it was unwelcome. But from a remark made by Eleanor when I was taking leave, I suspect that Tywysog, and not your humble servant, brought the old lady from her hut; perhaps she came to insist upon his being 'hung by the neck till he was dead—dead,' as a punishment for having wounded her son."

"I believe—I hope you are right," said Eva, sighing heavily, as if a weight had been removed from her heart; "and then Jane Pierce's anxiety for you to take Tywysog with you will easily be accounted for: her love for him has been frequently remarked by her fellow-servants, and no doubt some threat respecting him, uttered by Catryn, had reached her ears, and she set off before daybreak to try and appease her with a bribe."

"I am Catryn's debtor," replied Howel, "since, but for her indignation against you, poor Tywysog! I should have left you at Plas Conway, to remind your new mistress of her allegiance to your old master."

He looked down, as he spoke, at the dog, who was lying at his feet; Tywysog jumped up, wagged his tail, and looked up in his master's face, and had he been gifted with the powers of speech, he could not more eloquently have expressed his love.

"Sportsmen often tell you a greyhound is

an inferior species of the canine race," observed Howel, patting Tywysog's head; "but I differ from them *in toto*, and could bring forward innumerable instances of affection and sagacity to support my opinion. What do they think of the sagacity shown by poor Richard the Second's greyhound, who deserted him in his affliction, and fawned upon 'that cankered Bolingbroke?' It was a well-known opinion of Charles the First's, that a greyhound possessed all the good qualities of a spaniel without its fawning; and what dog, with the exception of Ulysses', has obtained the same degree of celebrity as our own greyhound Gelert?"

Eva's heart was ill at ease, and she felt much more inclined to weep than to enter into a controversy touching the merits of hounds or greyhounds; and she could not help wondering that Howel should think so much of his dog, when in the course of a few hours he would be leaving her, perhaps for years—perhaps—but no, the idea that it might be

for ever she would not allow for an instant to darken her thoughts. Old Evan entering at this instant with a table-cloth and other appurtenances of the dinner-table, broke up their *tête-à-tête*.

Dinner passed off but heavily in the parlour, but, judging from the shouts of laughter that were not unfrequently heard from the servants' hall, there was no lack of mirth in that quarter; and when Howel, some time afterwards, went in search of Jinking Hughes, he discovered that strong ale had lent its aid to keep up their spirits.

Sir Thomas Brown, in his "Inquiries into Vulgar and Common Errors," after giving a catalogue at which, in these days, a child in the nursery would laugh, concludes by informing you "that it is good to be drunk once a month." Now this opinion of Sir Thomas's Jinking Hughes had frequently heard his late master, Colonel Llewelyn, quote: whether he believed in it or not we have no opportunity of discovering; but of the firm faith placed in it

by his servant not a doubt could be entertained. By degrees Jinking began to think if it were good to be drunk once a month, it must be still better to be so once a fortnight; and probably some unlooked-for piece of good fortune followed this drunken bout, and so he had not patience to wait till the fortnight came round, for he was found at the end of the week, seated, jug in hand, and saying, in a thick voice, "My master, God bless him, says it is good to be drunk once a month — a - - -fortn-i-g-h-t, I mean — no, no, I'm wrong again, I should say once a w-e-e-k."

Howel, on the present occasion, thought that, however good it might be for the man, it was very bad for the master to have a drunken servant to superintend his affairs, and desired him, in a tone of authority he seldom assumed, to go to bed, and that he would overlook the grooming of the horses for the night. Jinking Hughes, by no means abashed, quietly threw off his upper garment, and muttering "Thank

you, sir," laid himself on the fern by the side of his own horse, and soon gave unquestionable proofs of his being fast asleep.

CHAPTER VI.

The hall of Cynddylan is gloomy to-night,

* * * * *

My overflowing tears gush out

The hall of Cynddylan, it pierces me to see it.

LLAYNABECH HEW.

DURING the early supper at Plas Conway, Wenefrede's ill-omened visit to Catryn Hên, was related to Mrs. Wynn; who, in her turn, mentioned many circumstances that had fallen under her observation, which went far to prove the unsettled state of Catryn's mind.

"And," observed Howel, "I suspect that from occasionally having seen her curses and imprecations take effect, she has at last worked herself up to imagine that she really possesses the power of bringing them to pass, and that

she is only inferior in her power of working evil to her master whom she so often names."

"A most unfortunate impression was made on her mind," said Mrs. Wynn, "many years since, by the cruel and injudicious remark of a magistrate; before whom she was dragged by a farmer residing in the mountains, who had lost, one after the other, a large flock of goats, and who attributed their deaths to the curses denounced against them by Catryn, when she caught them in the very act of eating up a large tubful of oatmeal that she had incautiously set down at the door of her hut. The learned magistrate, after listening attentively to all the farmer had to say, replied, with a shake of the head, that not a doubt remained on his mind of the goats having been bewitched, and that burning would be too mild a death for one in whose hardened countenance he could plainly see all the signs of one whom God had left and hardened."

"Had this magistrate who considered burning as too mild a death for poor Catryn,"

observed Eva, "condemned her to be torn to pieces with red-hot pincers, it would have been a merciful death in comparison to the life of misery his last sentence has entailed upon her : for years she has brooded over it, and I have learned from her daughter that she looks upon herself as a doomed woman, and frequently in her sleep mutters 'All the signs of one whom God hath left and hardened.'"

"And how many years is it since poor Catryn was carried before this 'Justice Shallow?'" asked Herbert : "why I could hardly have supposed it possible, in these days, that so ignorant a justice could have been found in the United Kingdom."

Eva, was ever ready to take up the cudgels and fight for her countrymen, right or wrong, and reminded Herbert that he used to remark that the Welsh were a century behind the English in every respect, and that he had therefore no right to find fault with their magistrates for being a little superstitious ; for, if her memory was correct, a century had not

passed since an English monarch had denounced vengeance against 'those detestable slaves of the devil, the witches or enchanters;' and did not he, in terms not fit to be mentioned, abuse Scott, who, he says, is not ashamed in public print to deny that there can be such a thing as witchcraft."

Eva spoke with so much energy that she was soon breathless; and long experience having made Herbert sage on the subject of an argument with her, he cried *peccavi*, and added that he was aware that a belief in witchcraft still existed in many parts of England as well as Wales; and that even amongst the higher ranks many a strange superstition still held its sway.

"Yes," replied Eva, laughing; "for that I can vouch, for when I was visiting your mother three years ago in London, a large party was one evening sitting round the fire, and many strange superstitious customs were related, first by one person and then by another. At length your aunt, Lady Brown,

said that when she was a girl she tried a charm to ascertain what her future husband would resemble, and that she had seen a figure which in every respect resembled that of Sir William Brown. The charm would not work unless tried on the first appearance of the new moon after new year's day ; and then you must go out in the evening unattended, and stand resting on a bar, looking fixedly at the moon and say,—

“ All hail to the moon, all hail to thee !
I pray thee, good moon, reveal to me
This night who my husband must be.”

Eva paused ; but Mrs. Wynn smiled, and said, “ Finish your story, Eva.” Eva laughed and coloured, but soon added,—

“ I wrote down the extremely clever and poetical words of this charm as soon as I was alone, fully determined to try the efficacy of it when the new year arrived. I had always understood strict secrecy was necessary on such occasions, and therefore I did not mention

my intention to any one; but when January and the new moon arrived, I set off alone. It was a bitter cold night, and a thick fog almost obscured the moon; but still she was faintly visible. With a tolerably firm voice I repeated the first line of the charm; but though I saw no one, my heart began to beat very violently, and my voice faltered sadly whilst it was repeating the second; and just as I finished it, a sound as of heavy footsteps approaching frightened the third line quite out of my head. I trembled from head to foot, and most sincerely did I wish myself safe at home again; but such wishes were useless, for the footsteps not only became more distinct, but the outline of a figure was visible, evidently walking towards the bar on which I was leaning. I felt that to run away would not lessen my danger, and determined to look my future husband boldly in the face at once, if fright did not deprive me of my eyesight; but what shame did I feel, not unmixed with a little amusement, when my ears were saluted with a deep

bray, and I discovered the representative of my future husband to be an old ass !”

Eva gave a momentary glance at Howel as she concluded her tale, which was returned by a pinch on her arm that made her start.

One tale of superstition served but as an introduction to another ; and the party lingered over the supper-table to an unusually late hour. At length, as Evan was removing the cloth, Herbert asked him if he had ever seen a ghost.

“ Yes, sure,” replied Evan ; “ him see one, two, in its life ; but did Master Herbert ever hear story one Squire Roberts and the devil ?”

Evan directed a glance at Mrs. Wynn, which she rightly interpreted into a request to tell his favourite tale, and, with a smile, she gave permission ; but as Evan interlarded his history with sentences in Welsh when his English began to fail, we will repeat it for him in entire English, adhering to his words as nearly as possible.

“ Well, Master Herbert, you must know

some years ago there was living in the vale of Conway, one Squire Roberts; he kept but one maid-servant, and she was very fond of sitting up very late at night; but one night her master heard her running up stairs as if the devil had been after her, and so, sure enough, he was. She went into her master's room and told him that as she was sitting by the kitchen fire, the devil appeared to her.

"Squire Roberts said, 'Peggy, I am very glad to hear it, for now, perhaps, you will go to bed at Christian-like hours.'

"With this answer, Peggy went up to her own room, and Squire Roberts turned himself round to go to sleep again. But, in turning round, his eyes fell upon something black that was standing at the foot of his bed. He sat up to look at it; and what should it prove to be but the devil.

"'Oh, ho! well, indeed, now is it you?' said the squire, looking hard at him; 'but if you have nothing better to do you are welcome to stand there, but I shall go to sleep, so good-

night to you ;' and in less than a minute he was (would you believe it) fast asleep, and snored so loud that Peggy thought to her dying day that he frightened the devil ; for in a very short time she heard him running down the stairs much faster than he had run up them. And it was the opinion of most of the Squire's friends that this was not the first time he had paid him a visit, or he would never have been so familiar and friendly with him."

Evan's implicit faith in the truth of this story was so evident, from his manner of relating it, that it was with great difficulty that any of the party could refrain from laughing whilst he remained in the room ; and no sooner had he quitted it than a laugh burst from every lip ; and thus in mirth ended an evening that had been alike dreaded by all the party.

And how had passed the day at Glyn Llewelyn ? Sadly enough ; and such perfect stillness reigned through the principal apart-

ments that it appeared as if the old house was deserted. When poor Mrs. Llewelyn had caught the last glance of her son she threw herself into a chair, and bemoaned his departure with more feeling than philosophy.

This burst of grief excited the contempt of the stoical Eleanor, and she observed, with a sneer, that it was well for the honour of the family that Howel had not been worked upon by his mother's tears, and thrown up his commission, even at the eleventh hour. "And I wonder, madam," she added, somewhat sternly, "that the recollection of the disgrace the wife of Rhees ap Gryffith brought upon herself and every one connected with her, by persuading her weak husband with her tears and entreaties from marching at the head of three thousand brave Britons who were bound to the Holy Land, did not make you more sparing of your tears."

Mrs. Llewelyn knew nothing, and cared less, about the wife of Rhees ap Gryffith; but the unkind tone in which Eleanor addressed

her jarred upon her feelings, and she answered in a sobbing voice,—

“That, for her part, she could not see any disgrace in a wife wishing to keep her husband at home with her, instead of sending him to the wars to be shot, starved, or drowned.”

Mr. Llewelyn had, by this time, got his passion up to boiling heat, and it required as little fuel to raise him to that pitch as if he had been a modern patent stove; and, turning with a face of wrath towards Eleanor, he exclaimed,—

“Zounds, Eleanor! I wish to goodness that I had never had you taught to read, and then you could not have stuffed your head with nonsense that happened hundreds of years ago, and tormented your best friends with it.”

Eleanor made no reply, but walked out of the hall with the air of offended majesty, and retired to her own room till dinner time. It was observed by the servants that grief had a directly opposite effect on their master and

mistress : with the former, everything went wrong, every one fell under his displeasure, from the chief falconer, whose situation had been for many years a sinecure, to the lowest understrapper in the stables. Mrs. Llewelyn, on the contrary, appeared indifferent to everything, and blunders of dairymaids and cooks were passed over without a remark.

The dinner hour arrived, but it did not improve matters ; for Mr. Llewelyn's irritability increased on observing the vacant places around the table ; and the same cause filled with tears the eyes of Mrs. Llewelyn and Wenefrede.

Eleanor's pride had not recovered from the insult it had received in the morning, and she sat in sullen silence, which was not broken by any of the party except when a benediction on the cook or the dogs burst from the lips of Mr. Llewelyn. The former excited his displeasure for having, as he fancied, ill-dressed his favourite dish : though, in fact, the fault was to be attributed to his want of

appetite ; and the latter by their extreme restlessness, and occasional whines, and sudden starts at the opening of a door, or approach of footsteps, which expressed, as plainly as words could have done, that they missed their young master.

Now this restlessness on their parts served to remind Mr. Llewelyn of what he was striving to forget ; and, pushing somewhat rudely his favourite dog from his knee, he exclaimed,—

“ Hang those dogs ! I wish they were far enough ; there is no peace to be had for them. Here, David, turn them all out of the hall.”

Mr. Llewelyn, instead of walking about his premises and looking after his men, as he was in the habit of doing for several hours after his dinner, no sooner arose from table but he ordered pipes and ale to be carried into his sanctum sanctorum ; and there he was found fast asleep when supper time arrived.

But we must return to our travellers. It had been settled between Herbert and Howel,

that as of parting scenes they had had more than enough, they would start on the following morning from Plas Conway, even before old Evan was rising: though to catch him napping, however early the hour might be, was, from his own statement, as difficult as to catch a weasel asleep; and great was his astonishment, grief, and indignation on the following morning when, soon after sun-rise, he entered Howel's bed-room, with some invaluable parting advice on his lips, to find it empty.

"Well, well," he exclaimed, "it give good advice Master Herbert; him luck not waste it; and no possib' it up so early, love its bed deal more than Master Howel.

"Och, och!" (alas, alas)! he exclaimed, in a tone of grief, on discovering that Herbert's room was likewise empty. "Poor young gentlemen, both lose fine advice."

But hope whispered that they might not yet have mounted their horses, and to the stable he bustled; where perfect quiet and empty stalls in an instant banished this last hope.

Considerably crest-fallen he retraced his steps to the house; but as he crossed the threshold a pleasing thought struck him, which was no other than the propriety of drinking a prosperous journey to the "two poor lads" in a horn of ale.

When Eva was made acquainted with the unceremonious departure of her lover and cousin, she looked upon herself as a very ill-used gentlewoman; but Mrs. Wynn said "she thought that they had acted not only wisely but kindly."

In the grey of the morning the travellers crossed the ferry, and before they mounted their horses Howel returned to take a farewell glance at the old castle. It has been observed that "there is given unto the things of earth that time has bent, a spirit's feeling."

But it was no poetical thought of this kind that led Howel to protract his gaze at the old castle till Herbert's patience began to fail. No, Howel simply felt that he might be looking on those ruined walls for the last time;

and there was something almost as affecting in the idea as if it had been an old friend from whom he was about to part for ever ; for with every nook, every angle, he was familiar, and every dangerous wall and dilapidated tower it had been his glory in his boyhood days to scale.

“ Good-by, old friend,” he at length exclaimed in Welsh.

The ferryman imagined this parting address was intended for him, and held out his sunburned hand and called down blessings on Howel's head. This blunder cost him a crown ; and the ferryman, who had already been over-paid by Herbert, devoutly prayed that it might be his good fortune to ferry over many more rich young squires, going to the wars.

Little does the traveller, who now dashes over the road from Conway to Abergeley at the rate of twelve miles an hour, dream of the dangers that not a hundred years ago environed the luckless adventurer who traversed

it ; but even at the time to which we allude, the road, after leaving the ferry-house, though impassable for any vehicle except a cart, lay for some distance through a pleasing silvan country, which sloped to the edge of the sea.

Our travellers, who had a long summer's day before them, sent their servants on to Abergeley, and determined upon quitting the beaten track should anything worthy of notice present itself. Eleanor had requested Herbert to pay a visit to Plas Bryneuryn, and to the top of the hill bearing the same name they mounted ; but so little could Herbert discover to repay him for his trouble in the view of the ruins of what had once been a large rambling house, that he turned to Howel and asked " of what crime he had been guilty, to induce Miss Llewelyn to impose such a penance upon him as to climb that hill under a scorching sun to see nothing."

Howel laughed, and assured him " that what he was pleased to style ' nothing ' was a ruin of immense importance in the eyes of

Eleanor, from its having been the residence of the faithful minister and general of Llewelyn the Great: a man who would cut off the heads of four or five commanders before breakfast, and cry 'fie on such idle work.'

"Heaven preserve us from such heroes in the Netherlands," exclaimed Herbert; "but what," he asked, "is that small building yonder on the shore?"

"It is the chapel of St. Trillo: prayers are frequently offered up there for prosperous gales for the fishermen who venture far out to sea, and for the general success of those who are employed in fishing in the wear that stretches along yonder from the march of the monks."

Herbert expressed a wish to visit St. Trillo's Chapel; but before they reached it they became aware that a large party of fishermen were also bending their steps in the same direction, whilst groups of women and children were already assembled on the shore, and a miniature fleet of fishing-boats was to be

seen rocking gently backwards and forwards as it lay at anchor in the calm sunny sea.

The group of fishermen was headed by a venerable grey-headed clergyman who, finding the chapel much too small to contain them, proposed reading prayers on the sea-shore. "Silently the people knelt," and not a syllable was heard to fall from the lips of the youngest child present during the service; and when the clergyman raised his hands and pronounced a parting blessing, it almost appeared (so perfect was the silence) as if even the waves were stilled by his voice, "and the mountain stream

" Which from the distant glen sent forth its sound,
Wafted upon the wind, was audible
In that deep hush of feelings, like the voice
Of waters in the stillness of the night."

Howel and Herbert had kept at a short distance from the group; but there was so much true piety in the accents of the venerable clergyman, that, although he spoke in a language unknown to Herbert, his heart went

with him, and he prayed as earnestly as any fisherman present for a blessing on the adventure.

After the crowd had dispersed, Howel walked up to the clergyman, and said,—

“And will you not bestow a blessing on us likewise, sir? for we, too, are bound on a perilous adventure.”

“Surely, my sons.”

And Herbert, following the example of Howel, knelt on the sand and received the kind and fervent blessing of the good old man. Deep and lasting was the impression made on the minds of the young men, and often did they reflect upon it with pleasure when far away from their native land “and old familiar friends.”

But a change suddenly came over the silent scene, and all was bustle, noise, and excitement; women, as well as men, might be seen busily engaged in pushing boats that had been lying high and dry on the beach, into the sea, and children trying to lift bags of oatmeal into

the boats which, being too heavy for them, sent them and their burdens rolling on the beach, to the great amusement of their young companions; whilst to their merry laugh was joined the barking of dogs and the crying of babies, the latter having been laid down on a cloak on the shore, whilst their mothers were engaged in helping their husbands to push off their boats into the sea. Here might be seen a barelegged, blushing damsel, carrying on her head a cheese of her own making, intended as a parting present to some highly-favoured youth amongst the fishing crew; and then might be heard the parting kiss of a husband or father, which spoke more of warm-heartedness than of refinement. At a short distance might be witnessed a severe contest between a boy and a dog, for a net left under the care of the latter by an absent master; the boy carried off the net in triumph, whilst the dog ran barking after him, and snapping at his bare legs. After our travellers had gazed for some minutes at this bustling and

interesting scene, they turned to take leave of the clergyman, but an invitation to partake of his breakfast sounded too agreeably to the ears of hungry men to be declined, and they gladly followed him to his thatched and cottage-like glebe-house ; nor did their hospitable entertainer find any true or just cause why he should complain of their not doing ample justice to all the substantial fare placed before them. Breakfast finished, on their way they went, and at length found themselves at the foot of Penmaen Rhos.

“ ‘ Angels and ministers of grace defend us!’ if this is the road we are to go,” exclaimed Herbert, bestowing anything but a friendly glance at the narrow, stony, and steep path which ran along the edge of a huge rock that looked as if it were suspended over the sea.

“ But you have travelled this road before,” remarked Howel, with most provoking composure, “ and as you did not then meet with any accident, I do not exactly see why you

should be under any apprehension of doing so now."

"Most philosophically argued," replied Herbert, looking most unphilosophically uncomfortable; and no wonder, for he perceived the path grew narrower, the precipice increased in height, and every step he advanced led him nearer to its brink.

"It was nearly dark," at length observed Herbert, "when I travelled over this frightful road before, and had not a merciful Providence watched over me, I should not now be here to tell the tale."

Now, although Herbert did not feel inclined, like the traveller who crossed in safety (thanks to his sagacious horse) over the only remaining plank of the bridge at Chepstow, to take to his bed after beholding by daylight the danger he had escaped, yet he could not look down the precipice without a shudder, when he reflected that inevitable death would have followed had his pony but stumbled over one of the innumerable large stones that lay in the path.

"There's a peregrine falcon!" exclaimed Howel, who was totally unconscious of the uncomfortable nature of his friend's feelings; "look, Gladstone, there—there—turn your head quickly, or she will be out of sight. Beautiful bird, wasn't she? A pair of peregrine falcons were considered, in Queen Elizabeth's reign, a present worthy of royalty, and no one of less rank than that of an earl was allowed to carry one on his wrist; and when Bangor was burned, in the reign of King John, and the good old bishop taken prisoner, he was ransomed by the payment of two hundred hawks."

Howel went on to expatiate on the wisdom of the laws of Howel Dda relating to falconry, and to give an account of the honours and rewards formerly preserved by them for the chief falconer, without discovering that Herbert heard not a word that he said, and was completely occupied in watching the footsteps of his horse. Not one exclamation of admiration did the beautiful bay of Llandidno draw

from him ; and we much doubt whether Wenefrede Llewelyn herself would at this instant have found more favour in his sight.

The dangerous line of road was, however, passed in safety. At Abergeley they rested for the night, and early on the following morning set off for Holywell, at which place Howel had appointed his father's steward to meet him. The steward had been collecting rents in Flintshire, and a portion of them was to be paid over to Howel.

Herbert only once imagined his neck to be in danger during their ride to Rhyddlan, a town of much celebrity in days gone by, but even at this period, with the exception of the castle, and a house that looked as if it had once seen better days, all traces of its former grandeur had disappeared. The day was intensely hot, and the red, uninteresting castle, and the parched and treeless tract of land that stretched down towards the sea presented so uninteresting an appearance, that Herbert exclaimed, " Can this horrid place have given

birth to my favourite air of 'Morfa Rhyddlan?'" (Lament for Rhyddlan.)

"Yes," replied Howel, "that old castle, with its heavy round towers and flanking walls, has witnessed many a fierce battle between the Britons and the Saxons for its sake; and on the memorable day when the Britons fought on yonder marsh, and not only lost the battle and the castle, but their king, Caradog, the 'Lament for Rhyddlan' was composed by Caradog's bard before he left the field of battle."

After a short pause, Howel desired Jinkin Hughes and the rest of the servants to ride quietly on to Holywell through Diserth, and then, turning to Herbert, he said, "I have some business at Bodfari, and, with your leave, we will take that line of road."

Had Herbert been aware that the line of road selected by Howel was a very circuitous one, he would probably have protested against its being taken; but, in happy ignorance, he followed his leader along the steep sides of

low picturesque hills till they reached the romantically-situated village of Bodfari, which commands from its elevated situation an extensive view of the lovely vale of Clwyd. Of this vale the worthy poet, with the most unpoetical name of Churchyard, has remarked,

“And if the troth thereof a man may tell,
This vale alone doth all the rest excel.”

At a low rambling house, surrounded with outbuildings, Howel reined up his horse, and was most cordially greeted by a good-looking woman, who talked away most rapidly at the top of a naturally shrill voice; an amicable dispute appeared to Herbert to be carried on for some time between the female and Howel, but at length, when he turned his horse's head and prepared to ride away, she laid a detaining hand on the bridle, and said something in a beseeching voice that proved irresistible, for Howel turned to Herbert, and said,—

“It is useless battling with Betty Roberts any longer, she will break her heart if we do

not go into her house and take some refreshment ; have you any objection ?”

“Objection ! Oh no, my good fellow, I shall rejoice to get out of this broiling sun even for a few minutes ! But may I ask who your dear friend Betty Roberts may be ?”

“I knew her formerly at Plas Conway,” said Howel, trying not to blush ; “she was Eva’s nurse ;” and I promised Mrs. Wynn that I would call and see how she was getting on in the world.”

They entered the small kitchen, which was remarkably neat, but the furniture it contained would in this century be considered scanty in an English cottage. Cheese, butter, the remains of a mutton-ham, and oat-cakes, were placed before the travellers. A little whispering then followed between Betty Roberts and her daughter, who quickly disappeared, and almost as quickly returned, bearing in her hand a large black jug of foaming ale, a welcome sight to men who had been riding exposed to the burning sun for

hours. Howel, after tasting the refreshing draught, turned to Betty and complimented her on her skill in brewing.

"Well, indeed now, sure enough," said Betty, grinning with delight, "I did brew that ale, but it was not for our own use, but for that of our parson, who is curious about his liquor; and he has been unfortunate in his wife: not that she is a bad kind of woman in many respects; but, you see, she was an Englishwoman, lived in London or some such out-of-the-way place; and I have heard poor Mr. Hughes say, with a sigh that came from his heart, that she knew no more about brewing ale than St. Paul, of whom she talks so much."

St. Paul's cathedral, we presume, was the favourite topic of conversation with Mrs. Hughes, not the apostle. "But," continued Betty, "you see as I live hard by the parson's house, it is very handy, if a stranger drops in, to be at liberty to send for a jug, for though my neighbour to the left, Nancy of Bryn-y-

Pin, has a great name in the country for her ale, the parson says it is but malt soup when compared with his."

How much longer Betty would have run on in praise of her ale, Howel had not leisure to ascertain, but he left her a proud and happy woman; the first feeling was called forth by having been honoured by a visit from a gentleman attired in so splendid a riding-dress as the one worn by Herbert, and the latter by her ale having been admired to her heart's content by Howel.

"Oh! Betty, Betty," exclaimed Howel, on observing a contest between her and her son, a boy not seven years old, respecting the honour of holding his horse, and in which the child came off victorious, "I am afraid that you give your children too much of their own way."

"Well, indeed, Master Howel bach, I believe I do; but then, you see, it is very little else that I have to give them."

After Herbert had ridden out of the untidy

farm-yard, and the vale in all its happy luxuriant beauty had burst upon his sight, he reined up his horse and looked around him in speechless admiration.

"Do you prefer this style of scenery to that about Glyn Llewelyn?" asked Howel.

"I cry your mercy," said Herbert, smiling, "when I confess that a country through which you may ride or walk without endangering your neck, does possess charms for me that all but counterbalance the 'sublime and beautiful,' but dangerous, scenery in the neighbourhood of Glyn Llewelyn."

Howel turned away his head, to conceal from his friend the utter contempt he felt for his want of taste.

"But," observed Herbert, "this calm, luxuriant, and richly-wooded vale, with its large flocks of cattle, ought not to be brought in comparison with any part of Carnarvonshire that I have seen; why this vale looks as if it were flowing with milk and honey."

"Whilst Glyn Llewelyn," interposed

Howel, "made you tremble lest the barren mountains that surrounded it should condemn you to starve."

"I honestly confess that some such fear did cross my mind more than once during the first week I spent there; for although there was certainly no lack of milk or honey, yet, as I could not discover from what source they flowed, I dreaded the supplies being suddenly cut off."

After our travellers had turned their backs upon the richly-wooded and picturesque vale of Aba Willa, hot, dreary, and uninteresting appeared the road across the mountains to Holywell, and with unfeigned pleasure they alighted at the door of the only inn of which the village could boast; for Holywell, though it has risen during the last century into a town of some notoriety, was at this period a long straggling village, with low mud or plaster cottages covered with straw thatch.

The travellers had observed numbers of country lads and lasses, dressed in their holi-

day attire, and carrying their shoes and stockings in their hands, crossing the mountains in all directions, but evidently bending their steps towards Holywell. Had not our friends been tired and very hot, they would probably have bestowed more attention than they did on the pretty situation of the village and the picturesque hill at the back of it, but the hope of speedily escaping from the rays of the sun, which were every instant becoming more intolerable, entirely engrossed their thoughts. Great then, when a neat, cool room, with a fresh-sanded floor, was passing before their "minds' eye," was their disappointment at finding the kitchen of the little inn filled with men, women, and children; and to learn that Mr. Llewelyn's steward had not yet arrived: a circumstance that would probably compel them to remain the night at the inn.

Herbert threw himself down on a bench, and looked around him with a wearied, dissatisfied glance on the noisy groups that surrounded him, and whose laugh sounded

almost as strange to his ears as the language they spoke. Howel had left the room to make some arrangements with Jinkin Hughes, and Herbert was left to amuse himself as he best could for nearly an hour ; and, having nothing better to do, he examined most minutely every article of furniture in the room : and greatly did he admire the earthen floor, which exhibited no signs of dust ; and the oaken dresser, that shone so bright as to answer much better the purposes of a mirror than did a three-cornered piece of glass that was hung on the wall,—before which most of the females present stationed themselves for a short space to smooth down their hair or to adjust their hats. The shelves above the dresser were well filled with pewter plates and dishes, that looked much more like silver than does that metal when left in careless hands, and at each end of the lower shelf stood a brass candlestick that shone like gold. These appeared to constitute the finery of the kitchen ; if we except a painting in a deep

black frame, of David playing on his harp, dressed in a scarlet mantle that barely reached to his knee, his foot resting on a golden footstool with a border of precious stones around it, and an angel standing before him with arms extended, and holding in his hands a music-book: every colour of the paint-box had evidently been exhausted on the wings; and purple, red, and orange had not been spared on the robe in which the angel was dressed. The innkeeper's wife, observing Herbert's eyes fixed on this singular work of art, removed it from the nail, and, carrying it to him, said something in Welsh which he correctly interpreted to signify "Is it not beautiful?" Several of the young females crowded round him, and spoke in tones so shrill and rapid, and with such energetic gestures, that, but for their friendly nods and good-humoured smiles, he would have imagined a violent quarrel was being carried on amongst them. A sudden exclamation of delight close to his ear made

Herbert suddenly turn his head, and in so doing his lips came in contact with a rosy cheek, the owner of which was a very pretty girl, who, instead of drawing back, bent forwards to obtain a nearer view of the picture. Herbert considered this a challenge, and kissed the rosy cheek; but in an instant he discovered his mistake, for a box on his ear, given with all the heart and with all the strength of the indignant mountain maiden, followed this ill-timed piece of gallantry; and the loud laugh and suppressed titterings that followed, came "o'er his ear," still smarting from the blow, like anything in nature but "the sweet south breathing upon a bed of violets:" at this instant, too, Howel returned, and joined in the laugh.

"A pretty figure, on my conscience, I shall cut in your next letter home, if you are not mercifully inclined," said Herbert, looking at Howel. "What will your sister Eleanor say to my taking such a liberty with a country-woman of hers?"

"That you ought to have made a better use of your time during your stay amongst us ; and gained a little clearer insight into the characters of the Welsh females, before you ventured to treat them with the least disrespect."

"Disrespect! by Jupiter, I meant none ; but if a very pretty girl puts her cheek close to your lips, what is a man to do?"

"Kiss it," replied Howel laughing, "provided he does not mind a box on his ear that will make it tingle."

The landlady now came forward and invited them to follow her to another room, which was gladly agreed to by Herbert, who was anxious to escape from the smiling girls in the kitchen. The room into which they were now ushered was but scantily provided with furniture; a few chairs and a large round table being all that it could boast of. The lack of furniture would have been forgiven had the room been empty ; but every chair was already occupied, and several respectable looking yeomen were standing around the table, listening to a

gentleman dressed in a shabby looking suit of black, who held a newspaper in his hand, and was seated in a large arm chair with a jug of ale before him. This gentleman in dingy black proved to be the vicar of Holywell, who, having that morning been indulged by the baronet at Mostyn with a newspaper not more than a month old, had stepped down to the inn to retail to the farmers he knew were assembled there, his budget of news. The possessors of the chairs arose on the entrance of the strangers, and the choice of all in the room was instantly at their command. The vicar proffered his treasure, the newspaper, to Howel, who, with his best bow, declined it, but said, that as he and his friend would most probably be detained at the St. Wenefrede till the following morning, the loan of it in the evening would be most thankfully received. The worthy vicar on hearing this, declared that the accommodations at the St. Wenefrede were most miserable, and though he could not boast much of those he had to offer at the vicarage,

(for that every windy night he expected the old house would be blown down), yet still, of two evils, he thought a bed at the vicarage would prove the least, and to the vicarage they must instantly remove; in short, *nay* was a word he would not listen to, and all Howel could persuade him to concede, was the leaving of Jinkin Hughes and the rest of his followers under the protection of the St. Wenefrede.

"And is this the only inn in the village?" asked Howel, as he followed the vicar out of the St. Wenefrede.

"Yes, but there is a very grand inn a little out of it, called the Star," replied Mr. Parry, the vicar; "but," he added, with a most mysterious shake of his head, "I trust that no one who has any regard for his soul will ever darken its doors."

The young men looked their anxiety to know more about this horrible abode.

"It is," said Mr. Parry, lowering his voice and looking around him as he spoke, "kept by a Romanist."

CHAPTER XIII.

“And the table was spread for the friar with speed,
And he feasted right merrily.
Did a friar wight
Ever lack of might
When he has taken cheap hostelry?”

BEFORE the party reached the vicarage, an addition was made to it by the arrival of Tywysog, who had made his escape from the stable in which he had been shut up by Howel, and followed him. Mr. Parry would not listen to his being taken back to his “prison-house,” and he was allowed to walk on by the side of his master. The description given by the vicar of his vicarage was by no means an exaggerated picture. It was a rambling whitewashed house only one story high, and covered with

thatch, on which, in many places, a luxuriant crop of emerald green moss had sprung up. No neat garden presented itself to view; but a low wall, fast falling to ruin, ran round a small entrance court, on one side of which stood, ranged on benches, a number of bee-hives; whilst the other was filled with beds of camomile and other herbs of medicinal value. Mr. Parry ushered his guests into a room, which, like that of the cobbler's, seemed to serve his family "for parlour, for kitchen, and hall." At a table that ran the entire length of the hall (for such was its high sounding name) stood Mrs. Parry and three nearly grown-up daughters, busily engaged in the clear starching and plaiting of caps, ruffs, and aprons. Young ladies of the present day, if caught by two handsome young gentlemen engaged in any domestic employment, would be covered with blushes of shame; but the Misses Parry blushed merely from surprise, and after making their best courtesies to the strangers, went on most perseveringly with their work. Mrs.

Parry pushed hers on one side, and went forward to welcome her unexpected guests; and as she did so she looked the personification of good humoured hospitality; but her brow became a little clouded on finding Herbert was an Englishman, for she observed with great simplicity,

"I can speak but very little English, and I am very fond of talking." Howel seated himself on one end of the long table, and he and the Misses Parry soon appeared as merry and familiar as if they had been intimately acquainted all their lives.

"And pray may I ask for what grand occasion you are preparing all these fine ruffs?" asked Howel, taking up one of them.

"Our wakes begin this evening," replied Miss Parry, "and they are the only gaiety that ever falls in our way."

"My girls," observed Mrs. Parry, "are often plaguing me to let them pay a visit to a sister of mine who lives in Chester; but I tell them it was a favourite saying of my father's,

that a woman and a cat were good for nothing, if they were not always to be found in the house or out-buildings. The only amusement he ever allowed me and my sisters (and I had seven) was going to church twice every Sunday ; but though we were such close house-keepers, it did not spoil our fortunes, for we all married. But make haste girls and clear away your frills and trumpery, for I want this table for a very different purpose."

Whilst this conversation was being carried on at the long table, Mr. Parry had been explaining to Herbert the nature of a wake, the origin of which he traced back to the idolatrous days of his forefathers ; and then he went on to show that, in the early ages of Christianity, people were in the habit of congregating at the dedication of churches : a ceremony performed on the birthday of the saint after whom the church was named, and which, in early days, was celebrated with prayers and thanksgivings. But the religious portion of the ceremony soon fell into disuse, and large par-

ties assembled on the vigil of the saint's birthday, not to pray, but to eat, drink, and make merry, and frequently spent the night in noisy revels. "And these relics of popery have descended to us," said Mr. Parry, "and we still observe the wakes with great spirit: though I beg you to observe, that no worship of images is retained amongst us; no, no! But every house for miles round will be more than full to-night, and there will be a harper engaged at many of them for the week, and there will be no lack of dancing for the young girls; or of wrestling, horse racing, foot ball, or prisoners bars for the men; and you and your friend must spend the week amongst us."

Herbert explained, that they must depart as soon as the steward arrived.

"No; that must not be, to-morrow is the Sabbath, and I cannot hear of your travelling more than a Sabbath-day's journey on it; which I take it would not help you much on your way. But we will not argue that point just now, for I see the table has got something bet-

ter than caps and ruffs spread upon it; so come, sir, and see if you can find anything you can eat amongst this homely fare."

The family dinner had been eaten long before the strangers arrived; but there was an abundant supply of cold meat and savoury potage placed on the table, which furnished forth a most excellent repast for our hungry friends. The Misses Parry soon quitted the room, to prepare for a dance to be held that evening on the village green; exulting not a little in the prospect of being attended to it by two handsome squires, evidently "of high degree." Groups of persons of both sexes were so constantly passing and repassing by the windows of the hall, that Howel at length asked if the wakes of Holywell were sufficiently famous to attract such crowds of people to them?

"Ah! well indeed, I wish," said Mr. Parry, with a deep sigh, "that it was the wakes that brought all the people you have seen pass to Holywell; but most of them, I grieve to say,

are Roman Catholics come to visit St. Wenefrede's well. This is a day always observed by them with great respect; for it was, according to their lying tales, on the 22nd of June, that Caradog, Prince of Wales, cut off the head of the holy virgin, Wenefrede."

"A most ungallant act, truly," said Herbert, laughing. "But how had this holy and doubtless beautiful lady excited his rage?"

"Why, sir, according to the foolish popish legend," answered worthy Mr. Parry, in a tone of great contempt, "the prince had been struck by her beauty, and demanded her in marriage; but she was not only a saint but a nun—the first and last time the characters I suspect were ever united," added Mr. Parry, with a significant smile: for he hated all Romanists as heartily as ever did 'Saracen' an infidel dog. "Well, sir, finding he could not attain the nun by fair means, he determined upon trying foul, and meeting her alone one day, he attempted to carry her off by force, but she made her escape and ran away from him.

But though she could run very fast, so likewise could the prince, and at the top of the hill above the village, he overtook her, and his late love having suddenly changed to hate, he pulled out his sword and struck off her head, which rolled down the hill, passed by this house, and at length, rolled down into the church, and stopped not till it reached the steps of the altar, where her uncle, one St. Beuno, under whose care she had been placed, was officiating. What St. Beuno said on the occasion, the legend does not mention, nor how his saintship escaped being drowned; for on the spot where the head rested, a spring of miraculous size instantly burst forth."

"Now," said Mr. Parry, with a hearty laugh, "as I am as certain as if I had seen him, that St. Beuno was very fat and very lazy, his being able to jump across that stream was a moral impossibility, so we must look upon his preservation as a part of the miracle."

"The head was, of course, preserved and regarded as a precious relic by the nuns of the

convent, to which head and body had once belonged," said Herbert.

"Little, my good sir, are you aware of the efficacy of the prayers of a saint," replied Mr. Parry; "St. Beuno took up the head, muttered half a hundred Latin prayers over it, not one word of which he understood the meaning of, and modestly concluded, by requesting in Welsh, that the head of his niece might be united to her body; so rational a request was, of course, granted, and the pious virgin was not only restored to life, but lived fifteen years afterwards to tell the tale—or, I might, if I were not charitably inclined, say, the lie."

"Well, but Mr. Parry," interposed his wife, "though I do not believe that the head was joined to the body again, yet I must say, that if those strange spots that are said to be the blood of the saint, and only appear just at the time of the year her head was cut off, are not blood, I should like to know what they are."

Now good Mr. Parry, though a well informed man on many subjects, was no natu-

ralist; and this favourite remark of his wife's, as he could not answer it satisfactorily, he was in the habit of turning a deaf ear to, or uttering a contemptuous pshaw. On the present occasion, being anxious to impress on the minds of his visitor his total disbelief in all Roman Catholic superstitions, he not only favoured his wife with a more than usually emphatic pshaw! but added, "I should have hoped that no one but a foolish Romanist would have believed such nonsense."

"Nonsense or not, Mr. Parry, my mother believed it to be the blood of the saint," retorted Mrs. Parry, "and she was as good a Protestant as ever went to her grave."

"Your mother was a fool," said Mr. Parry, waxing warm, "and I have often heard that the children take after their mother, particularly the girls; but," added he, chucking her under the chin, "you are wise enough for me on all subjects but this."

Mrs. Parry was easily mollified, and she smiled good humouredly, as she answered,—

"I do not wish to be wiser than my neighbours, and they all think as I do about those spots."

Mr. Parry had never read *Hudibras*, or he might have remembered that

"A man convinced against his will
Retains the same opinion still,"

and that the rule would hold equally good when a woman was concerned, and not have attempted to convince his wife that she was a superstitious fool: an attempt he did not relinquish as long as he lived; and unfortunately he died whilst Linnæus was in petticoats, and never had the satisfaction of hearing that the great naturalist had found a solution to the mystery, in a species of moss which blossoms in June, and causes every stone to which it adheres, to look as if covered with drops of blood.

"Well, Mr. Parry," said Howel, who was anxious to interrupt this matrimonial squabble, "I suppose we must not ask you to accompany us to the well; but I know the way to it, and will, with your leave, introduce my friend to the wishing stone."

"Oh! yes, go by all means; but you will be sadly shocked at the idol worship you will witness there this evening; and remember you look at the red spots, and tell me what you think of them."

"But suppose we should arrive at the same conclusion as Mrs. Parry," said Howel, laughing, "would you then wish for our opinion?"

"No, no; silence must then be the order of the day; but it is impossible you should think so:" and Mr. Parry became so warm at the bare idea of such a heresy, that he commenced reasoning on the subject, and in his extreme earnestness, walked down the hill at the foot of which the well is situated; but the instant he perceived how nearly he was approaching 'to unholy ground,' he hastily retraced his steps. We lately read a tour in North Wales, in which a description of the town of Holywell figured; but that beautiful specimen of modern gothic architecture which superstition had reared over the spring of St. Wenefrede was not even named. We are no architects, nor

do we intend wearying our readers with a long list of technical terms; but we would recommend any strangers to the spot, to visit it, should an opportunity offer, and judge with their own eyes of the lightness and beauty of the tall pointed arches and the flying buttress that adorn the exterior, and to decide whether the interior is not even more worthy of notice. The well into which the miraculous stream pours forth its astounding body of water, is polygonal; the columns that rise above it are singularly beautiful, and after many serpentine wanderings, meet and form a canopy worthy of the water-king: who, doubtless, frequently holds there his court. The legend of the saint, and beautiful carvings in stone are scattered around, but they appear to have been placed there to do honour to the house of Stanley, and not to the saint: by no means an astonishing circumstance, for the saint had been long dead, and was probably tired of working miracles; and the Stanleys were living, and willing to bestow munificent gifts, of which this build-

ing and the chapel above it remain as memorials to this day.

But to return to our travellers, who are still standing on the same spot where Mr. Parry left them ; a crowd around a small spring close to the road preventing their advancing. At length, the crowd began to disperse, but several aged persons remained seated on the brink of the well, who bathed their eyes with its water with one hand, whilst with the other they dropped a crooked pin into the spring, muttering at the same time a spell, but in so low a voice that the words were not intelligible. These poor deluded creatures believed that the dimness of age, or any other disease that had attacked their eye-sight, would be washed away by the miraculous powers of the water of this well, when used with faith on the 22nd of June.

There was a female amongst the group that still surrounded the "eye well," as it was called, who attracted general attention. She was young and pretty, and held in her arms a child apparently two years of age ; he was a

beautiful boy, and appeared to be sleeping, but on the departure of a party who had occupied the well, the female advanced, placed her child on the brink, put a crooked pin in his little dimpled hand, and bade him throw it into the water, and repeat after her the words of the charm : it then became evident to all, that the poor infant was blind. The expression of delight which spread over the face of the poor woman, as she bathed again and again the eyes of her child with the water, that she firmly believed would give to them the blessing of sight, affected Howel deeply, and drawing nearer towards her, he begged to be allowed to look at the eyes of the child ; he found that they were both covered with a cataract, and learned from his mother that she had not had any advice for him, feeling convinced that nothing but the water from this well, could do them good. A few more questions drew from her a tale of such simple pathos as nearly to bring the tears into Howel's eyes : she told him that she had found her way from Yorkshire, with

only a few shillings in her pocket, sometimes living a few days in the same place in order to obtain a little work, the payment for which would enable her to travel onwards; and that she had been nearly two months performing her journey, for her child fell sick, and that had detained her ten days in Chester: "and oh!" she exclaimed, "I felt as if I had never known sorrow till that time, when I feared after all I had gone through, that my child would die. The parting from my dear husband and my other children was very hard to bear, but I forgot all about that when I looked in this dear child's pale face. But all my trouble is well repaid now," she said, fervently kissing him, "he will see by this time to-morrow, and he will look up in my face and smile at me. Oh! that will be joy."

"Poor deluded creature!" exclaimed Herbert, in a tone of deep compassion aside to Howel; "her happiness will be but of short duration."

"What is to be done for her?" asked

Howel; "to leave her without undeceiving her as to the imaginary virtues of the spring, would be cruel. 'I must be cruel, only to be kind.'"

But the undeceiving her did not prove so easy a task as Howel had anticipated; for the poor woman clung with the tenacity of despair to her belief in the miraculous powers of the water, and at length burst into tears, and declared that, "it was very unkind of any one, to wish to persuade her, that her poor boy would not recover his eye-sight."

"My good woman," replied Howel, "you are worn down by anxiety and fatigue: there is, I perceive, an inn hard by, follow me there; I will order you some food and a bed, and to-morrow morning I will call and see you again."

The poor woman dashed away the tears that were streaming down her face, and said,—

"I am quite sure, sir, that you meant very kindly, though your words went through my heart like a knife."

She was then preparing to follow Howel, when Gladstone stopped her, and gave her a guinea. So unexpected and munificent a gift quite overpowered the poor creature; and she would have thrown herself at his feet and kissed them, had he not caught her by the arm and prevented her. A refreshing meal was soon spread before her at the inn, and she then acknowledged to Howel, that it was the first time she had tasted a morsel during the day, and that she had passed the previous night under a bank; not having been able to make her request of sleeping in a shed or barn, understood at any of the farm-houses at which she had applied.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands together, and looking up in Howel's face; "God grant that you may never know one-tenth part of the misery I felt last night: I had no house to shelter me, no food to give my child, no money; I was without a friend, and unable to make myself understood by those amongst whom I might have found one. Oh!

I felt as if God had forsaken me. But it was a wicked thought, for I had but just set out on my journey this morning, when I met a woman who was going into a hay-field with breakfast for some men at work there. She looked at my child and kissed him, and I saw by her looks, though I could not understand a word that she said, that she pitied him; she gave him a bowl of milk, and then offered me one too—how sweet and good I thought it!—she then took two large oat-cakes out of her basket, placed one in each hand of my child, and turned into a field. I wish she could have understood the blessings and thanks I sent after her. It was long since the poor child had made so good a meal, and it did me as much good to see him eat it I believe, as if I had swallowed it myself. But I am rich now,” she said, holding up her guinea, “and shall be able to pay for what I shall want on my way home, and not have to work or beg.”

Howel then told the poor woman of a plan he had formed for the benefit of her child; to

which, at length, he gained her consent. He proposed sending the woman and her child mounted on a pillion behind Jinkin Hughes to Chester, and placing the child under the care of a medical man, who was much celebrated for his skill in removing cataracts; Howel promised to pay all the expenses attending her residence in Chester.

“Well, sir, if my child does not see by this time to-morrow morning, I will take him to Chester. And oh! if I could thank you,—but my heart is too full, I feel as if I was choking.”

Howel hastily bade her good-by, and once more joined his friend. Herbert had with some difficulty pushed his way through the dense crowd of pilgrims which surrounded the bathing well, and was gazing with deep interest on a scene, that to him “was strange and new.” Pilgrims of both sexes, of all religions and ages, were standing around the well, impatiently awaiting the departure of those who were already in possession of it; whilst numbers might be seen seated on the steps

that led down to it, bathing a wounded foot or injured arm ; and the centre was occupied by devout pilgrims, who stood immersed to their chins, and so had stood for several hours, muttering Ave Marias, and dropping bead after bead on their rosaries, totally regardless of the icy coldness of the water. One man having quitted the well somewhat suddenly, was stopped just as his foot was on the last step, by his father confessor, who asked him somewhat sternly, "If he had not omitted an Ave Maria or a Paternoster ? for if such were the case his penance would be of no avail, and that so far from the water having washed away his sin from his heart, it would only have spread it over his whole body." The poor, dripping, trembling wretch, assured the priest that he had repeated fifteen Ave Marias and fifteen Paternosters.

"Remember your penance is but half accomplished, it must be repeated to-morrow."

The man bowed low, and the crowd around the well made ample room for him to pass.

"Of what crime has that man been guilty?" asked Herbert, of a group of Englishmen who were standing near and shaking their heads most ominously at the half-drowned sinner, as he passed them.

"Sir," was the answer; "he has been guilty of a great sin; he caused the worthy father yonder to eat and drink on a fast day. Father James,—all the saints bless him!—had been journeying from house to house on a rigid fast day, preaching most unweariedly the crime of breaking the fast till the clock had struck twelve: it had just sounded eleven when the holy man entered the house of yonder sinner; he was weary and hungry, and threw himself down and exclaimed, "twelve o'clock struck as I entered the house, supper will doubtless soon be ready."

"Now the carnal-minded man did not tell the holy priest he had mistaken the hour, but hastened to the kitchen and ordered the supper to be placed on the table instantly, and an excellent supper soon made its appearance; and

poor Father James, little dreaming of the sin he was guilty of, ate of every dish, and drank out of every jug of ale that was near him: for he was thirsty as well as hungry. At length, the clock struck twelve; but there was much talking going on at the instant, and no one heard it but the mistress of the house, who started from her seat and exclaimed, 'The virgin Mary preserve us, we have broken the fast by eating our supper an hour too soon!' I was present, and oh! I wish you could have seen the look the good father cast on the man; and then so great was his distress of mind, that before he could speak to him, the father was obliged to empty a large jug of ale that stood near: he then, in a voice of thunder, commanded him to do penance in this well."

This watery penance was not the only one enforced by the priests on their erring children. Men, and women, might be seen, crawling on their hands and knees through the crowd, a task of much toil and difficulty; whilst others were threading the arches, like-

wise on all fours, and muttering prayers. Some desperate offenders were condemned to whirl around the polygonal well, till it was hard to say which felt the most giddy, the penitent or the spectators. But one spot in the bathing well appeared to possess equal charms for the sinner and the saint,—the Romanist and the Protestant: thousands of eyes had been fixed with an all-absorbing interest on it in the course of the day. And what was the magnetical charm possessed by this spot in the well? To a common observer, nothing was visible but a large flat stone; but this stone was supposed to be endowed with more wonderful properties than the celebrated one at Blarney; for it was believed, that to those who bestowed a kiss upon it with true faith in its virtues, the paramount wish in their hearts at that moment would be granted. From this circumstance, the stone obtained the name it still bears, of “the wishing stone;” but of late years its votaries have been but few, and it is now as seldom favoured with a kiss, as

its rival in absurdity, the Pope's toe. As Llewelyn and Gladstone approached the brink of the well, a young girl was stooping down and kissing the stone, and she did it with such fervour, that not a doubt could be entertained of her faith in its miraculous powers : her hair streaming with water, and her cheeks the colour of a ranunculus rose, she soon ascended the steps ; and Howel perceiving by her dress that she was a Welsh girl, asked if she would tell him her wish. She laughed and said, "Yes, for it is no affair of my own ; I came here to wish success and happiness to young Llewelyn of Glyn Llewelyn."

Howel started and looked earnestly in the face of the girl, but he could not recollect ever having seen her before.

"Are you acquainted with young Llewelyn?"

"No, I never saw him, but they say if he returns from the wars, that he is to be married to our Miss Wynn, of Plas Conway ; she kept my mother and all of us from starving last winter, and mother and I thought the least we

could do for her, would be to let me come here to-day to wish a good wish for her husband that is to be."

Such a journey, to a country girl who had most probably never before slept out of her own parish, was a serious undertaking, and Howel asked if she had come alone.

"Yes," said the maiden, "but I expect somebody will come and meet me to-morrow, and see me safe home."

There was something in the voice and manner in which these words were said, that led Howel to suspect that it was neither the mother nor brother of the young girl that was to conduct her home.

"Will looking earnestly on the stone not answer as well as kissing it?"

"Indeed, I think I have heard it will," replied the girl, stroking back her wet locks.

"Then look at me, and mark how earnestly I am gazing on it: now I am wishing you a good husband."

The girl laughed, blushed, and thanked him.

"But," said Howel, "as I am going to the wars and shall not be present on your wedding day, you must take that as an earnest of my good wishes."

So saying, he placed in her hand two crown pieces, which the girl received with a look of astonishment, and then uttered a torrent of thanks and blessings. As Howel turned away, she exclaimed, "You are, you say, going to the wars: you are young squire Llewelyn?"

Howel replied in the affirmative, and felt well pleased that the young girl should carry a good report of his proceedings to Conway.

"I really must hasten my departure from Wales," said Howel, addressing Gladstone, "or I shall leave all my money behind me."

"And your character to boot," answered Herbert, laughing, "for I have observed, that pretty wandering damsels are the objects you select to shower your charity upon."

Howel was unwilling to mention the cause of his last donation, and endeavoured to divert Herbert's observation from himself, by

fixing it on the elegant Gothic Chapel above the well ; but Herbert's thoughts were at this instant withdrawn from Howel and the chapel, by the figure of a man who was evidently performing a penance : he wore a loose woollen dress, fastened round his waist with a broad leather belt, and was bare-footed and bare-headed ; at the arch between the two wells he stopped, and remained standing with uplifted hands and eyes, till he had dropped every bead on his rosary.

"I never beheld so strong a resemblance in my life," exclaimed Herbert, looking earnestly at the penitent.

"Resemblance to whom?" asked Howel, in a tone of surprise ; for he had imagined Herbert's attention was fixed on the chapel windows.

"Resemblance to your sister Eleanor, in that tall handsome man who is standing by yonder arch."

Howel instantly looked in the direction pointed out by Gladstone, but the penitent

appeared aware of the interest he had excited, and hastily turned away, but not before Howel had caught a side glance of his face, and he exclaimed,—

“I thought I could not be mistaken in that tall stately figure, it is Trevor Owen; as great a villain as lives unhung; but you must have heard me speak of him more than once, Gladstone, he is a first cousin of Eleanor’s, but thank Heaven! no cousin of mine; the likeness you so quickly discovered has been frequently observed by other persons, but he is several years older than Eleanor. Glyn Llewelyn was his home for many years, but he was ‘a bold bad man,’ and frequently has my father forbidden him to darken his doors again; however, Mrs. Llewelyn always succeeded in procuring his pardon, but pride, not love, was the link which connected them. Trevor Owen had run through a large fortune, and had not the means of maintaining those attributes of a gentleman, “a hawk, a horse, and a greyhound;” and his aunt, fearing he

would, should his poverty be blazed abroad, lower the honours of her house, was anxious to keep him at the Glyn. This pretended love on her part for her nephew, deceived no one but my kind hearted noble father, who never dreamed that his wife was not as free from guile as himself. But at the death of his aunt, Trevor exhibited such unequivocal proofs of a bad heart, that my father once more forbade him the house, but generously allowed him an annuity. He left the country, and for many years nothing was heard of him, except once a year when he wrote for the money due to him; but I suspect he all that time carried on a correspondence with Eleanor, and by working on her pride, obtained from her large sums of money. About a year and a half ago, he arrived late one evening at the Glyn, an unbidden and unwelcome guest. Like most villains, he has a winning tongue; he won over my father by a well got up tale of sorrow and repentance, and then humbly requested a large sum of money to pay off some

debts contracted in his thoughtless days, which weighed heavily on his conscience. A lying villain ! conscience he had none. He then went on to state, that he intended retiring into the Monastery of La Trappe, to atone by a life of mortification and unbroken silence for the sins of his youth. My father was so well pleased with this accomplished hypocrite, that he not only promised him the money he wanted, but asked him to remain a day or two at the hall. One morning he declared that urgent business called him away, and that he must instantly leave him ; my father was holding out his hand to him, when Wenefrede rushed into the hall, in so exhausted a state, that had I not caught her, she would have fallen on the floor. As soon as she was sufficiently recovered to speak, she said that Trevor Owen had persuaded her to accompany him early that morning to the sea-shore, and had then attempted to force her into a boat : she having previously refused to marry him, which he had earnestly solicited her to do. Some country people passing at

the time, had run to Wenefrede's assistance, but she fainted in their arms; and Trevor Owen for some reason that has never been clearly ascertained, rushed back into the hall. On hearing Wenefrede's history, I darted after Trevor Owen, who, in the confusion had made his escape; but he was already out of sight, and my father seizing hold of my arm cried 'Howel, leave that sinner alone for Eleanor's sake.' You can little imagine what it cost me not to follow him, and bid him fight for his worthless life; but my mother, Eleanor, and Wenefrede all clung to me and held me back, till the miscreant had not only gained the shore, but was sailing off in his boat. My father has made me promise not to risk my life against that of yonder worthless man, or I would quickly find other employment for him than that of muttering Ave Marias."

We will not write down Herbert's indignant burst of rage on hearing this history; suffice it to say, that Dr. Johnson would have found in him a man after his own heart, viz:—"a good hater."

"By Jupiter!" exclaimed Herbert, looking in the direction in which he had last seen Trevor Owen; "I am thankful to see that he has taken himself off, or I doubt whether the gallows and the hangman, suddenly arising between us, would prevent my attempting to drown him in the well, or strangle him with his rosary."

Just at this instant, a crowd of people moved away from the well, and the prostrate figure of Trevor Owen, lying on its brink with his hands clasped and raised high above his head, was to be seen; "Now might I do it pat, now he is praying," exclaimed Herbert, forgetting he was not Hamlet.

"And I," said Howel, "say 'up sword,' and to its owner, come with me, for I can assure him, that if he kills the first cousin of one sister, his suit is not likely to prosper with the other."

Howel hurried Gladstone down a narrow, deep, and picturesque valley, one side of which was adorned with beautiful hanging woods,

and at the bottom of which the miraculous stream flowed with a soothing and quiet murmur till it fell into the sea. The sacred stream at this time flowed on its way in peaceful idleness. No dingy lead works, noisy wire or paper mills, disfigured its banks, and great would have been the distress of any true Yankee who had beheld "such a privilege of water thrown away" on a picturesque corn mill, to which the monks laid claim.

Herbert was so well pleased with this happy valley, that it was long before he condescended to attend to Howel's hints about returning to the vicarage, and then he only did so to remonstrate against his doing anything so absurd. "Bless me! Llewelyn," he exclaimed, "for pity's sake leave me here, and do not condemn me to do penance by dancing with a partner who will not understand a word I shall utter."

But Howel was inexorable, and assured him that his absenting himself would cause "grief of heart" to their kind entertainers.

"I am almost tempted to wish that they were condemned to do penance in the well, and then I might have been left to my own meditations in this quiet spot, and not have been dragged into a crowd, to act the part of a dumb man ; but if I must follow you, stop one moment whilst I examine these blood besprinkled stones."

Mr. Parry met them as they entered the hall, and his first question was,—

"Well, gentlemen, and what is your opinion respecting the spots?"

"That they are brought out by some monkish trick or other," said Howel.

"That was once my opinion," said Mr. Parry, "but I have been told that similar spots have been noticed at a holy well in Carnarvonshire, and that no Roman Catholic priest lives near the place, so I have been obliged to give up that solution of the difficulty: now what can those spots be?"

"The blood of the saint and nothing else; so why should you puzzle your poor head

about the matter," exclaimed Mrs. Parry, who, dressed in her best attire, had, unperceived by her husband, joined the group.

"Torture should not extort such an opinion from me," exclaimed Mr. Parry.

The Misses Parry now made their appearance, and like the hero of a celebrated tour,—

"Oh, they were dressed in *their* Sunday's best."

Howel made an unlucky blunder, and mistook Miss Kitty Parry for her elder sister, and engaged her accordingly for his partner for the dance on the green. Miss Parry bridled a little, but whispered to her sister that she was very glad she had not been asked, as she must have declined the honour, for that she had been engaged for several weeks past to a young gentleman who was on a visit at Mostyn Hall; and, she added, a little spitefully, "You must confess that I shall have much the handsomer partner of the two." Miss Kitty was, however, determined to confess no such thing, and, moreover, added something about love and blindness, to which her sister prudently turned

a deaf ear. It was with poor Herbert, only Hobson's choice : Miss Betty Parry or no partner ; so with his best bow and most winning smile, he requested the honour of her hand for the dance. It was with difficulty that Howel suppressed a smile, as his eyes glanced over the slight elegant figure of Gladstone, and rested on the round, shapeless form and broad good-humoured countenance of his partner ; whose simper of inexpressible delight, at having such a handsome, gaily dressed cavalier, to astonish her companions on the green with, could only be surpassed by that of her mother. Mrs. Parry stretched her short neck till the deep crimson of her cheeks assumed a purplish hue, and her capacious mouth was stretched by a grin to its utmost extent ; but not to exhibit a remarkably white set of teeth : no, she had not one thought of self, all were absorbed in delight at the wonderful piece of good luck that had befallen her daughters. If everything was not couleur de rose to Mrs. Parry, her happy frame of

mind cast quite as agreeable a tint over every object, and the trees and herbage which, in consequence of an almost unprecedented drought, had become of a dingy brown hue, appeared to her to be of a most beautiful and refreshing green. Nay, so great was her optical delusion, that she fancied Mr. Parry looked quite handsome that evening. As she swam after her daughters, for she could not manage a stately walk, her gown looked as if it had caught a portion of the matronly pride of its wearer, and the broad plaits appeared to inflate to double their original size.

When the party reached the green, the astonishment expressed, not only by looks but words, at the extraordinary good luck of the Misses Parry, swelled the happiness of Mrs. Parry to such a height, that, throwing herself on a bench, she indulged in a laugh that came warm from her heart; and which was only checked by hearing her friend Mrs. Roberts, the wife of a small squire in the neighbourhood, remark to a person standing near her,

that she could not for the life of her imagine what Mrs. Parry was laughing about, and that, for her part, she thought a person who laughed at nothing looked very like a fool: now this caustic remark of Mrs. Roberts's may be forgiven her, for dancing had commenced, and not one of her four daughters had been asked to join the merry throng. "And yet," said Mrs. Roberts, as she looked with an hyena-like grin, at the Misses Parry and their handsome partners, "they are no beauties after all."

"Pity 't is, 't is pity," that our wise legislators have not passed a law, by which a partner at a dance would be secured to every fair votary of Terpsichore. What heartaches, backbiting, anger, malice, and all uncharitableness it would have the satisfaction of banishing for ever.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Now clear the ring! for hand to hand,
The manly wrestlers take their stand."

SCOTT.

MORE strength of limb was perhaps seldom exhibited than by the merry dancers, on what was, by complacency, styled the green at Holywell: by complacency we say, for on the present occasion not a vestige of green turf was to be seen; and in a short period the by no means noiseless footsteps of those who were exemplifying the nursery ditty of—

"Here we go up, up, up,
And here we go down, down, down,
And here we go round about, round about,
Round about every one,"

had raised such clouds of brown dust, that

Mrs. Parry could no longer distinguish her fat rosy-cheeked daughters and the cocked hats and feathers of their partners. So she turned to an elderly lady, who occupied one end of the bench on which Mrs. Parry in the pride of her heart had seated herself plump in the middle, and said, "I really beg your pardon Mrs. Evans, I did not hear all you were saying about John Williams being converted by the Roman Catholic priest Thomas Roberts."

"Well, now indeed, you see it is all true, and I'll tell you all about it," said Mrs. Evans, quite forgetting, in her anxiety to enlighten her neighbour, a vow she had made ten minutes before, never to speak to Mrs. Parry again; who looked so puffed up with pride, and seemed to think it quite a condescension to sit on the same bench with her: "Though," muttered Mrs. Evans, "if it comes to that, if we were to talk of pedigrees, I could afford to give her a few hundred years just to start with, and beat her after all."

Mrs. Parry was totally unconscious of having given offence, for her heart was filled with good will towards all created beings, but she had neither ears nor eyes for anything but her daughters, as long as they were visible; and her touchy neighbour, not being a mother, could not enter into her feelings, but looked upon the little attention bestowed on her most highly seasoned dish of village news as the effect of pride. Not a word was omitted of John Williams's sayings, or the priest's rejoinders, and a more edifying history of a sinner turning saint was seldom related, or more firmly believed.

"But, bless me!" exclaimed Mrs. Parry, when the tale was told, "how astonished his poor wife will be to see him in heaven; for I have often heard her say, she was sure he would go to a hot place, he was such a bad husband. But talking of the priest puts me in mind of St. Wenefrede's well. Now you know what a good man my husband is, but he has some queer fancies, and he won't let me or

the girls go down there ; which is a great pity, for they miss seeing a great deal of good company : and you see," casting a glance of mingled pride and happiness towards the spot in which her daughters had last been visible, "that my girls take with great people."

"I see nothing," retorted the sharp Mrs. Evans, "but a cloud of horrid dust ; and I wonder at you, Mrs. Parry, for allowing your girls to spoil their best clothes by dancing about in it."

Mrs. Parry took no notice of this remark, but went on ; with her speech observing, "But it was not of my girls that I was going to speak, but to ask if it is true that the statue of St. Wenefrede has been taken down ?"

"Yes, indeed, and it was only last night that Mr. Evans was wondering by whose orders it was done."

"Oh ! you see, Mr. Parry says the Roman Catholics are not the powerful people they once were ; and I take it they are getting poor and cannot afford to dress Saint Wenefrede as

smart as they did when she wore that russet velvet gown left her by some great English lady in her will, and which I hear has at last dropped to pieces ; and then, you know, the poor saint was stripped some years ago of her best shift."

"Yes!" exclaimed Mrs. Evans, "I was present when the shift was given to James II. It had belonged, the priest told him, to his great-grandmother. Bless us all ! he did look pious when he received it ; and then he kissed a spot of blood upon it, that it was said had fallen when his great-grandmother's head had been cut off, and which the priest assured him not even the holy water from the well could wash out. But what the king wanted with his great-grandmother's shift, I never could find out ; and I never thought much of him after your husband told me that the old lady it had belonged to was no better than she ought to be, and that it was for no good that she had done, that a cousin of hers cut off her head."

"Well, now," said Mrs. Parry, who, like "gentle dulness, ever loved a joke." "I am afraid unless my daughters and servants spin faster than they do at present, that my great grand-children will not be much the better for any shift of mine; I often tell my girl Jane, if she does not mind what she is about, that she will not have half such a chest full of linen to take away with her on her wedding day as I had; every sheet and towel of my own spinning, Mrs. Evans."

"Lord bless you, Mrs. Parry, all the girls of the present day are sad idle things, caring for nothing but dress and pleasure. Oh! had my poor mother (worthy old soul), but lived to see these sad changes, she would have been in a passion from morning to night, not that she was a passionate woman either, but she could not bear to hear of a change in any of the old ways; and she used to say that, next to Solomon, her mother was the wisest person that ever lived, and that she thought if no change had taken place in the world from

Noah's time downwards, it would have been a much better place to live in : what a saving, she used to remark, would there have been in dress alone, had we been content with the blue paint used by our ancestors. And as for the Romans, our vicar used to talk to her about them, it used to surprise her more than a little, how a sensible man could believe that their coming amongst us did us good, and as to their teaching us the comfort and decency of clothes, she was quite sure that the world was much happier before it was taught what decency meant."

"But my good friend," said Mr. Parry, who had been an unobserved listener to these remarks, "your mother who had the best dairy in Denbighshire, and was as proud of it as if it had been conducted upon exactly the same principles as the one in the ark, must have considered it a benefit to the county, the Romans having taught us the art of making cheese."

"The Romans teach us the art of making cheese! nonsense, Mr. Parry, you are only

laughing at me, you are such a man for a joke."

"I assure you, Mrs. Evans, we knew nothing about the matter, till the Romans took compassion upon us and taught us."

"I should be sorry not to believe you on your oath, Mr. Parry, but I don't say that I would then."

"But, Mrs. Evans," said Mr. Parry, smiling; "what will you say when I tell you they taught us to spin likewise?"

"Oh! now I have caught you out in a story," cried Mrs. Evans, with a triumphant laugh; "for we all know the line of 'when Adam delved and Eve span;' and you told me yourself, that a great great grandson of hers peopled this country, so it is not to be believed that he did not teach the women how to spin. And besides what we all know about Eve's having been a spinner, does not Solomon say of the good wife, that, 'She layeth her hands to the spindle and her hands hold the distaff?' So as spinning was so well known

in the days of Solomon, what have you to say now, about our learning it from the heathen?"

"Nothing, except that our forefathers knew no more about Solomon, than they did about spinning and cheese making."

Mrs. Evans lifted up her hands and eyes in silent horror, and Mrs. Parry took advantage of the pause that followed, and said "she hoped that Mrs. Evans did not think that she meant to find fault with her daughter Jane, when she said she was not fond of spinning; oh, no, she only meant to observe, that she liked other work better, but that she was as good a girl as ever lived!"

"If she is not fond of spinning, I doubt whether your mother or mine, would have called her a good girl," said Mrs. Evans, cutting short Mrs. Parry's maternal panegyric; "and besides from what I know of her, I should say she was inclined to be idle."

"Idle!" almost screamed the horrified Mrs. Parry, "only look at her at this instant; see how high she is jumping in the dance."

"I see she garters below knee," said Mrs. Evans, dryly.

"And that she is not idle?" demanded Mrs. Parry.

"No, only that she can work hard enough when trying to win a husband."

"Win a husband! bless your heart, Mrs. Evans, it is the last thought that would come into her head; why she is as innocent as your own pet lamb."

"Very likely," said Mrs. Evans, "for that, judging by its actions, has more wicked thoughts in its head, than any other living thing about the house: the girl is very well in her way, but I don't think my mother or grandmother would have admired her, that's all, and they, next to Solomon, were the wisest people that ever lived."

To find that two out of three of the wisest people that ever lived, would not have admired her daughter Jane, proved "the unkindest cut" that malice could have devised; and poor Mrs. Parry felt as much humbled as

an hour before she had felt elated. It never occurred to her, that an intimate acquaintance would take pleasure in saying spiteful things, if they were not true; "long experience" having failed to make her sage touching the most glaring fault in the character of the daughter and grand-daughter of absolute wisdom.

But Mrs. Parry was "a cheerful soul," and her dejection was fast passing away, when it was banished quite by a gentleman who formed one of the party from the hall, coming up to her and saying,—

"Indeed, Mrs. Parry, you have reason to be proud of your daughters, they are certainly the prettiest girls on the green this evening, and I am told that they are as good as they are pretty."

"Well, indeed, sir, it is very kind of my neighbours to speak so handsomely of my girls," said the delighted mother; but before she had time to add, she believed that it was quite true, the gentleman had passed on. So she

turned to Mrs. Evans, and with a grin of perfect happiness asked,—

“Did you hear that, neighbour Evans?”

“I heard a gentleman say, what he knew to be a lie,” retorted Mrs. Evans.

The dispute between the neighbours was waxing warm, when fortunately the harps ceased to play, the dancing stopped, the late clouds of dust subsided by degrees, and the Misses Parry, each led by her handsome partner, walked towards the bench on which Mrs. Parry was seated.

“I shall take myself off,” said Mrs. Evans; “for though I thank my stars that I had no niece here to make a fool of herself in the dance, I have a nephew that intend strying to get his head broken in a wrestling match, and I’ll just go and look after him.”

Our party followed her, and on reaching the spot where the principal wrestlers were already assembled, they observed a stout, short, but broad chested and athletic young man, come forward and challenge any man

not belonging to the parish of Witford, of which he was a native, to try a fall with him. The challenger proved to be the nephew of whom Mrs. Evans came in search, and who had carried off the wrestling prize at so many matches, that a fall and disgrace appeared the inevitable consequences of an encounter with him. No wonder then, that he should have to repeat his challenge more than once before it was accepted. Herbert at length threw his hat, gloves, and sword on the ground, and then begged Howel to explain to young Evans that he would try a fall with him for the honour of England. Evans cast rather a look of contempt at his antagonist, but he soon found that he was mistaken in his man; for though Herbert was of slender frame, no Malcolm Græme was ever more firmly knit: he was also remarkably active; and though the days were long past when the mayor, with the mace, sword, and cap borne before him, and followed by the principal aldermen in scarlet gowns, with gold chains, all mounted

on horseback, would ride forth to witness a wrestling match, yet it still continued a favourite amusement amongst school-boys, and Herbert had acquired great proficiency in the game. A ring was speedily formed around the wrestlers, and the most absorbing interest kept the spectators silent, but it might have struck the least observant person present, that no Welshman, woman, or child wished success to Herbert; nay, even his late partner Miss Betty Parry, clasped her hands and uttered a shrill scream of dismay, when after a contest that had lasted twenty minutes, Evans received a fall; he, however, recovered himself instantly, and was loudly cheered by the crowd: his vinegar-looking aunt even clapping her hands and exclaiming, "Well done, Evan bach!" But Evan bach had discovered that "no woman's arm was round him thrown," and that he had to deal with no common wrestler, and was now so completely on his guard, that it was long before Herbert gained the day; but at length the right shoulder and

left foot of poor Evans touched the ground, and "a fall, a fall," rung around, accompanied by a loud "och! och," an interjection in frequent use amongst the Welsh, when their feelings are deeply touched.

Few and faint were the hurrahs bestowed upon the "conquering hero," and they were uttered by some Englishmen. Mrs. Evans followed her crest-fallen nephew, and charitably hoped that the cursed Englishman, who had brought shame upon him in the eyes of so many of his neighbours, might break his neck before he reached London. Many of the Holywell lads crowded round Howel, and intreated him, for the honour of Wales, to challenge Herbert; but friendship was stronger in Howel's heart at this instant than patriotism, and he declined the tempting offer, being well aware that Herbert was not his equal either in strength or skill.

No other competitor coming forward, wrestling was abandoned, and casting the stone and prisoner's bars commenced. The latter

pastime was evidently the favourite: Herbert proved himself no less swift of foot than he had previously done stout of limb; and though he often gave chase, he always reached the goal untouched, and his party was at length pronounced victorious. Howel, who was growing weary of playing the agreeable to Miss Kitty Parry, gladly accepted the challenge of a singularly powerful young man to "cast the stone."

During the middle ages, throwing the stone, the bar, or the plummet with agility and grace, were accomplishments deemed worthy of the notice of kings and princes, and formed part of the education of the gentry of the land; but they were fast falling into disuse in England, though they still held sway in North Wales. Mr. Llewelyn was a great promoter of athletic sports, and had had his son trained almost from his cradle to cast the stone and the bar, throw the spear, to wrestle, and to run in foot races; and by the time he had arrived at man's estate so widely spread was

his fame that had the youth who challenged him but heard his name, he would have left him by the side of Miss Kitty Parry, and not exposed himself to the certain disgrace that awaited him. The young man raised the ponderous stone from the ground, then lifted it above his head, and hurled it from him to a distance that excited the astonishment and admiration of the lookers on. Howel then took up the stone with an ease that augured ill for the success of his opponent, held it out at arms' length, and then waved it in a circle around his head, and springing forward, hurled it far from him. On measuring the ground it was ascertained that he had cast it a yard farther than his adversary. The stone was cast by each party three times, and each time Howel beat his antagonist.

Loud exclamations of delight rent the air, and the unsuccessful youth was slinking somewhat sulkily away, when Howel called after him and bade him accept the prize, which was a small sum of money collected amongst the

spectators, and lay it out in ale at the Saint Wenefrede, and drink success to manly sports and long life to Howel Llewelyn.

"Are you young Llewelyn of Glyn Llewelyn?" asked the young man, the dark look passing from his brow. "Why then, indeed, I am prouder of having thrown my stone within a yard of yours than if it had passed ten yards beyond that of any other man in North Wales."

It is difficult to say whether Miss Kitty Parry felt most proud of herself or her partner at this instant: she became wonderously loquacious. Howel, with a politeness that sprung from a good heart, seemed to listen and find amusement in her conversation; but "'t was seeming all," for not only his thoughts, but his heart was at Plas Conway, and he gladly followed Mr. Parry to the vicarage, who declared that his daughters had already had more amusement than their heads could stand.

Any acquaintance met by the Parrys were

invited to supper, and just as they reached the vicarage Mrs. Evans passed by, and Mrs. Parry's short-lived anger having quite spent itself, she laid a detaining hand on her arm, and whispered in her ear,—“we have a capital good supper; do just step in and take a bit with us, there's a good woman.”

Now Mrs. Evans was much too stingy to have a good supper either for herself or neighbours, but still loved dearly “creature comforts,” and, therefore, bottling up her spite for a more fitting occasion, she tried to look pleasant, and said, “Indeed, I should not care much to just look at your good cheer.”

“Well, indeed, now, that is kind and friendly of you,” said the hospitable, kind-hearted Mrs. Parry.

The noise, the bustle, the talking, the laughing, the quantity that was eaten, and the quantity that was drunk at this supper caused Herbert to open his eyes in astonishment. Miss Betty Parry had been obliged to relinquish her seat by his side in favour of a fat

old lady, who, not satisfied with completely filling her own chair, contrived to monopolize the better half of his also ; and when Herbert endeavoured in his turn to encroach a little on his neighbour's on his other side, he found that he had to contend with a second Sir John Falstaff, and that to move him an inch was as impossible a task as to shove Pen Maen Mawr into the sea ; he was, therefore, obliged to submit to being pressed and squeezed till he fancied he could feel himself growing flatter and flatter every instant ; and, to add to his discomfort, both his neighbours squared their arms as if they were driving instead of eating, and completely concealed him from view. Herbert was most unsentimentally hungry, and Schacabac, at the imaginary feast of the Barmecide, was not more to be pitied than our poor friend, who bid fair to starve with a real feast spread before him.

At length his disappearance from the company was observed by Howel, and not a little was he amused by discovering Herbert's hand-

some dark eyes peeping through a small aperture left between the elbows of his neighbours, and to hear him exclaim, in a doleful voice, "I have not tasted a morsel to-night."

"Bless me, my dear sir, you don't say so!" cried Mr. Parry, in a voice of hospitable distress; and then, raising his voice and speaking in Welsh, he said, "Mrs. Roberts! Mr. Jones! the poor young gentleman that is sitting between you is starving."

"Then all I can say is, that I don't pity him," replied Mrs. Roberts, "for Mr. Jones was remarking only this instant what a handsome, abundant supper it was, good enough for a prince."

And so saying, Mrs. Roberts, as if apprehensive of Mrs. Parry being inconvenienced by having too much cold meat in her larder, commenced a fresh attack on a roast turkey, and recommended Mr. Jones to follow her example. A deep sigh was heard to proceed from behind the arms of these determined

supper-eaters; it reached the ears of Mrs. Parry and perplexed her sorely; she felt unwilling to interrupt Mrs. Roberts and Mr. Jones, who she was delighted to see doing such ample justice to her good cheer, but at the same time she was terribly afraid lest her English guest should go supperless to bed. She looked at Mr. Parry, but he did not observe her. She then arose from her seat, and stretching her short neck as far down the table as she could possibly accomplish without danger of dislocation, cried out, "Mr. Parry! Mr. Parry! the poor English gentleman has not eaten a morsel yet!"

"Never mind, Mrs. Parry," said Mrs. Roberts, eating away whilst she spoke; "if he can't make a supper upon such good things as are staring him in the face, I say starving is too good for him."

But Mr. Jones having turned round to look at the dainty youth, the real state of the case flashed upon his mind, and he exclaimed, "Why, Mrs. Roberts, we have been smother-

ing this poor lad between us, and he has not had a sight yet of the good things on the table. Come, suppose we drink his health in a glass of this excellent ale, and then give him elbow room."

"The night drew on wi' sangs and clatter,
And ay the ale was growing better ;"

when Mr. Parry arose and proposed a parting toast, as twelve o'clock was about to strike. The hint was taken, and the merry party quickly dispersed. Herbert, tired and depressed, by witnessing mirth in which he could not take a part, instantly requested leave to retire to his chamber. Mr. Parry accompanied him, and ushered him down a long stone passage on the ground floor, at the end of which he found a double-bedded room.

"First come, first served," said Mr. Parry; "so you may take your choice, and the bed you don't fancy your friend must put up with."

"By-the-by," asked Herbert, "can yo—"

tell me where Llewelyn is gone to? I have observed his seat at the supper-table has been long unoccupied."

"He is gone to the Saint Wenefrede; there has been a dreadful row between the Holywell lads and the Witford, and he was afraid that in the bustle your horses would fare as ill as you were near doing, and go supperless to bed."

"And what occasioned this row? all seemed peace and harmony when we left."

"True; but when 'the ale is in, the wit is out;' and it would not be looked upon as a good wake if we had not a row or two."

Herbert, wearied in mind and body, undressed in such haste that he hardly gave himself time to cast a glance around his homely but neat apartment. He threw himself into his bed, determining to fall asleep instantly, and not even to bestow a thought on Wenefrede; but just as he was falling asleep, he was roused by a loud grunt, and the same thing having occurred again and

again, he exclaimed at last, "Hang the horrid pigs! I wish their sty was at the other side of the house."

When Howel entered the room, a louder grunt than any that had been yet heard greeted his arrival.

"Gladstone!" he cried; but no Gladstone answered, for he had placed his hands on his ears, and buried his head beneath the bed-clothes to shut out the sounds that "murdered sleep."

"Gladstone!" said Howel, raising his voice; "if some jealous Othello has not mistaken you for a Desdemona and smothered you, tell me how you came to have an old sow and a litter of pigs under your bed?"

"I suspect," replied Herbert, in a sleepy tone, "that you will find them under your own."

A deep bass grunt, proceeding evidently from the corner of the room in which Howel's bed stood, confirmed the truth of this remark, and Howel, lamp in hand, proceeded to inves-

tigate the matter. Under the bed neither pig nor sow was to be found ; but in the very centre of one, by no means of an extra size for a single person, lay a youthful Hercules of about eight years of age, flat on his back, and with arms extended till they touched either side of the bed, and snoring as no one but the renowned giant in 'Jack and the Beanstalk' was ever reported to have done before. Howel, though much annoyed, could not refrain from laughing, and, after turning the youthful snorer on his side, without undressing, threw himself on the small portion of the bed that fell to his share.

To account for Howel's unexpected bed-fellow, it will only be necessary to state, that just at the instant that supper was being placed on the table, a great friend of Mrs. Parry's had informed her that she must return home, in consequence of her little boy being nearly asleep.

"Poor, dear lamb!" said Mrs. Parry ; "it would be quite a sin to make him walk a

mile sleepy as he is : he must be put to bed here ;" but as worthy Mrs. Parry had promised every other bed in her house, not only twice but thrice over, with the exception of those that were to be occupied by the strange gentlemen, it was not easily settled where the dear lamb was to be put. But at length Mrs. Parry declared that he would sleep like a top, and disturb no one, and that he should share the bed of one of the strange gentlemen. Mrs. Parry, in the bustle and excitement that followed at the supper-table, quite forgot to mention the circumstance to Llewelyn.

Howel was just sinking into that happy state when you are hardly conscious you are awake, when the fat hand of his bed-fellow fell upon his nose and roused him up, and he became aware that in consequence of the child having rolled on his back, unless he awoke him from his heavy sleep, there would be no chance of his enjoying any that night ; but the boy soon slept again, and snored, as

the Edda says, when speaking of the giant Skrimner, as loud as if it had thundered.

"This is past all endurance," exclaimed Howel, and starting from the bed, he walked hastily up and down the room. The night was sultry, and Howel at length walked out into the open air. Thoughts of his home and of Eva came crowding thick upon his heart, and so lost was he in melancholy musings that, almost unconscious of the road he had taken, he found himself once more standing by the Well. He had been followed by his faithful dog Tywysog, whose many excellent qualities render him worthy of a more particular description than has yet been bestowed upon him. He has already been named as a descendant from Llewelyn's Gelert, and from him he had inherited extraordinary muscular power, and long, stiff, and bristly hair, clearly proving him to be but distantly related to the sleek-skinned greyhound, that from its fleetness of foot had nearly superseded his more formidable and majestic progenitors;

but claiming for him the higher honour of having Highland greyhound blood in his veins, and of being well fitted by nature to attend a chieftain when sallying forth "with hound and horn" to chase the deer.

CHAPTER XV.

How beautiful is night !
 A dewy freshness fills the silent air,
 No mist obscures, nor cloud, nor speck, nor stain,
 Breaks the serene of heaven ;
 In full-orbed glory yonder moon divine
 ROLLS THROUGH THE DARK BLUE DEPTHS.

* * * * *

How beautiful is night !

SOUTHEY.

"How beautiful is night," has probably been felt quite as forcibly by the unlettered shepherd, whilst watching his flock on the hill-top, as by the most enthusiastic of poets, but we doubt whether shepherd or poet was ever more fully alive to its beauties than was Howel Llewelyn on the present occasion. The dewy freshness of the air and the soothing stillness which reigned around, offered a

delightful contrast to the close bed-room and noisy companion he had just quitted. But for the occasional sharp bark of the hill-fox, and the rushing of the stream from its rocky home into the well beneath, deep repose would appear to have fallen on all objects, animate or inanimate. As the beams of the moon fell upon the projecting portions of the beautiful structure raised above the well, they seemed to case them in silver, whilst the receding parts fell back in the dark shadows of night, till the eye could no longer trace their form.

What a change had taken place on that spot since Howel had visited it a few hours before. Then, hundreds of human beings had crowded around it, the sinner and the saint, standing side by side, the loathsome beggar jostling the mighty of the land; there the proud priest and the humble churchman had been seen rushing down the steps of the well, and bathing in its health-restoring waters. The crowds of all ages and all ranks, that had been attracted by the wishing stone, were also gone. The

stone lay distinctly visible in the clear moon-light. "Could it but record," thought Howel, "the thousands of wishes that have been breathed upon it to-day, what a strange list of hopes, fears, and wild passions that fill the human heart, would it not present!" But his meditations were broken in upon by the sound of approaching footsteps, and on looking up he perceived a very young and splendidly dressed female, approaching the well; that her visit was not to "the wishing stone" was soon evident, for instead of looking towards it, she looked anxiously around her, and clasping her hands together, she exclaimed in a voice of agony, "My mother, my poor mother, what will become of you, when you find that your child is gone?"

A loud footstep was now heard at a short distance, and Howel, not wishing to play the part of an eavesdropper, was on the point of leaving the corner in which he was concealed from view by a projecting pillar, when a glance at the tall, stately figure of the man, who had

by this time advanced to the spot on which the poor trembling girl was standing, induced him to draw back still further into the shade; the back of the man was turned towards him, but the loud shrill screech of an owl caused him to start and look around him, and as the moon's beams fell strong on his face, Howel discovered that he was not mistaken, and that the man was Trevor Owen. Tywysog appeared to have made the same discovery, for he uttered a deep growl; the growl did not escape the anxious ear of guilt, and long and anxiously did Trevor Owen look around him, to ascertain from what quarter it had come. Howel whispered his orders to Tywysog to be quiet and lie down, and he instantly crouched at his feet as if he had been a statue.

"The night is wearing fast away, let us instantly adjourn to the house of the priest, my best beloved," said Trevor Owen, "or your absence may be observed, and you may be torn from me again."

So saying, with gentle force he attempted to draw her from the well.

"Stop," she cried, "kneel down and swear on the edge of this well, where, for my sake, you this morning performed so severe a penance, that the tale of your having attempted to carry off Wenefred Llewelyn is false, or I will return back to my mother."

"There was a lurking devil" in the sneer that played around the mouth of Trevor Owen, as he replied in a soft insinuating voice. "For the sake of the poor simple girl, who, all unsought on my part, gave me her heart, I would gladly bury that unfortunate affair in oblivion; but so solemnly called upon, I can no longer conceal from you, that *she* proposed to run away with me, not I with her."

"Villain and liar!" exclaimed Howel, rushing forward, "draw, and fight for your worthless life."

Startled and surprised, but not thrown off his guard, Trevor Owen dashed Howel's sword from his hand, and sprang at his throat with the fierceness of a tiger cat. A most desperate struggle commenced when, Tywysog with a

savage growl sprang upon Trevor Owen, who instantly turned and fled; but vain would have proved his utmost speed, had not Tywysog been called back by Howel: for once he appeared inclined to dispute an order of his master's, but a second and more peremptory summons, however, brought him back, and he lay down, uttering low growls, by the side of Howel, who had raised from the pavement on which she had sunk, the terrified and nearly fainting female. At length, opening her eyes, which she had hitherto kept shut, as if fearing to look upon the combatants, she exclaimed,—

“Oh! you look good and kind; save me, save me from myself. Pray, pray, take me back to my mother; make haste, or it may be too late: I may be carried off by Trevor in spite of all the resistance you can make.”

“If being carried off by Trevor Owen is all you have to fear, madam, rest satisfied that as long as I remain by your side, he will not dare to molest you; but still I shall not feel satisfied till I have delivered you safely into

the hands of your mother. Will you point out the road to her house?"

"We are lodging at the Star; and as my mother is a great invalid, perhaps it will be better not to have her aroused to-night. I can mention what has occurred to-morrow."

"You undoubtedly are the best judge, madam, of the proper season to communicate this adventure to your friends."

No answer was returned to this remark, and the remainder of the walk appeared likely to be passed in silence, when Howel, looking at his companion, perceived that tears were streaming down her cheeks. Touched by her beauty, her extreme youth, and the fearful fate that awaited her should she fall into the hands of Trevor Owen, he drew nearer to her, and, in a voice trembling with emotion, said,—

"Madam, you will, perhaps, pardon the strange liberty I am about to take when I tell you I am Wenefrede Llewelyn's brother; and I am about to say to you, what I would

have thanked any one, from the inmost recesses of my heart, for saying to her, had she been exposed to misery as certain as that which is in store for you should you become the wife of Trevor Owen."

"You are the brother of Wenefrede Llewelyn!" exclaimed his companion, looking at the same time earnestly in his face; "then Trevor Owen's history is well known to you. Oh! as you hope for happiness in this life, and peace when stretched upon your death-bed, tell me, are the tales I have heard of his wickedness true or false?"

Howel took the trembling hand which was held out to him, and looking up to heaven, said,—

"I swear, by all that I hold most sacred, that Trevor Owen is a vile traducer, and that every syllable that he uttered respecting my sister was a lie . . ."

"Oh! say no more! say no more!" cried the unhappy girl, withdrawing her hand and covering her face with it, whilst deep sobs

burst from her lips. Howel stood by her side till this violent burst of sorrow had a little subsided; and "oh! do not deem him weak," if we add, he brushed away more than one tear before his miserable companion had sufficiently recovered to speak.

At length, with a violent effort and a deep-drawn sigh, she said,—

"Pray, pray, tell me all you know of — of — Trevor."

"It will cause you much pain, I fear," said Howel.

"Go on," was the answer, uttered in a faint voice. "I can bear to hear anything now."

Though Howel did "not aught set down in malice;" yet the tale; when finished, so deeply distressed the poor girl that her cheeks grew colourless; and she trembled perceptibly.

"You think me weak, and I fear you think me wicked," she at length said, fixing her eyes on the ground; "but, oh! you can form

no idea of all the arts practised, not only by Trevor Owen, but by Father Jerome, his father confessor and mine, to gain my consent to a match to which my mother had declared her determination never to give hers ; warning me again and again that my large fortune, which was entirely in my own power, was the bait that lured him back after she had forbidden him the house, and not love for me. Oh ! that I had attended to her warning words ; but Father Jerome not only urged me to marry Trevor Owen, but brought me letters from him in which he declared that if I did not promise to be his bride I should drive him to desperation, and that he would terminate his miserable existence with his own hand. I dared not show these letters to my mother, and when I flew to Father Jerome for consolation, instead of uttering words of comfort, he loaded me with the bitterest reproaches, and assured me that should Trevor Owen put an end to his existence his blood would be on my head. Weeks

of misery I will pass over that were spent by the side of the sick bed of my dear, kind mother. At length Father Jerome persuaded her that if she would but bathe in the waters of the well of St. Wenefrede, *with faith*, they would restore her to health. We arrived here yesterday, and just as I was retiring to rest I was informed that Father Jerome demanded a few minutes' conversation with me. I had learned to tremble at his name, but I dared not refuse to see him : on entering the sitting-room he came forward to meet me with a scowl on his brow, exclaiming, in a low, hollow voice, that still rings in my ears, 'Miserable girl, vain have been my warnings ; what I have long prophesied has been on the eve of being accomplished, for know that, only a few minutes since, did I dash from the hand of your devoted lover, Trevor Owen, a loaded pistol, with which he was on the point of putting an end to his wretched life. I have imposed a most severe and degrading penance upon him, which he

will perform to-morrow; but woe betide you, obstinate girl; should he make a second attempt on his life.' In short, Father Jerome succeeded at last in drawing from me a promise of becoming the wife of Trevor Owen this night; and but for the interposition of the holy saints in my favour, by sending you to my rescue, I should, ere this, have changed my name."

She paused an instant; and then, in a voice convulsed with grief, she exclaimed,—

"I will never put faith in any man again. Misery, nothing but misery awaits me in this world. I will—I will—" she added, sobbing bitterly, "take the veil."

Howel was not as much startled by this declaration as he might have been had there been no such person in the world as Eva Wynn, nor did he feel much apprehension of her putting her threat into execution; but he would have given much to know whether love or indignation called forth his violent burst of grief: if love, he felt that the lamb would yet become the bride of the wolf.

"You are a Protestant?" suddenly observed his companion.

"I am!" replied Howel, not a little surprised at the question.

"Then you cannot advise me as to what conduct I ought to adopt with Father Jerome: after his prohibition to the contrary, though I long, yet I dare not tell my dear mother all that has passed."

"Oh! promise," said Howel, in a suppliant voice, "not to fear the curses of a vile man, and to lay bare every secret of your heart to your best friend, your mother."

There was a solemnity, and an expression of deep interest, in Howel's voice and manner that touched the heart of his companion, and raising her eyes to his, she said,—

"Although you are a Protestant, I feel that your advice is good; and, though I may be tortured by the most cruel of penances by Father Jerome, I call upon all the saints above to withdraw their protection from me if I conceal a tittle of all that has passed from

my mother. And now, sir," she added, as they approached the door of the inn, and holding out her hand, "how am I to thank you? I cannot; but I will pray to the Virgin Mary to bless you; and, oh! should your sister ever be exposed to dangers such as mine, may as brave and honourable a protector arise to her assistance."

Howel kissed the hand he still held with more fervour than Eva would, perhaps, have considered necessary, had she witnessed the transaction, and he and his unknown companion parted never to meet again in this world.

Had Eva possessed Cornelius Agrippa's magical mirror, on which the poetical Lord Surrey is said to have looked when far away from "his lady love," and beheld her stretched on a couch, suffering from severe illness, her feelings would probably have been every jot as unpleasant, had she, on this night, cast her eyes upon it and beheld Howel, not gazing on the moon and thinking of her, but walking

beneath its rays with a lovely female, and evidently thinking only of his companion.

When Howel reached his room at the vicarage, he found Gladstone sitting up in his bed and laughing immoderately; having just discovered who was the author of the grunts that had ever and anon haunted his dreams. The young snorer had found the bed-clothes a very unnecessary encumbrance, and had kicked the counterpane into one corner of the room, the sheets into another, and the blankets into a third, and was now lying in a state of nature in the middle of the feather-bed. The mirth of Gladstone, and the absurdity of the whole scene, were strongly at variance with Howel's feelings; and, although he could not refrain from joining in Herbert's mirth, it was with feelings very similar to those of a man called upon to laugh at a farce, after weeping at a heart-rending tragedy.

"I am no longer at a loss to account for your not having been in bed to-night," said Gladstone. "Why that fellow yonder was

enough to rouse the seven sleepers, therefore no common mortal could hope for a minute's rest. But," he added, suddenly changing his tone, "what ails you, Llewelyn; are you ill?—you look pale and agitated."

Howel related the strange adventure that had befallen him; but Gladstone had scarcely patience sufficient to allow him to finish it before he jumped out of bed, and seizing his sword, declared he would go in search of the vile defamer. Howel found it difficult to refrain from laughing whilst he represented to Gladstone the propriety of dressing before he set off on his Quixotic adventure. Gladstone soon joined in his mirth, and observed that to search for Trevor Owen would be but a loss of time, as he was probably miles from Holywell already; "But," he exclaimed, "should he ever cross my path again he or I must fall."

"Valiantly resolved; but as you are dressed, I will throw myself on your bed and try and procure a little sleep, or I am

afraid my fair friend, Miss Kitty, will suspect, from my jaded appearance, that I have been passing the night at the St. Wenefrede."

"Pleasant dreams to you: I shall walk out into the air," said Gladstone.

Howel fell fast asleep in a few seconds, but was soon aroused by a step that bore no resemblance to that of time "which leaves no sound," and on looking up he beheld his late bed-fellow stumping out of the room with all his wearing apparel tucked under his arm. Howel soon slept again, and by so doing proved himself a very degenerate hero of the age he lived in; for if the authors of that period are to be "in aught believed," "balmy sleep" was quite unnecessary to the existence of a hero or heroine. When compared with such ethereal beings, we fear poor Howel will be regarded as a mere terrestrial sluggard.

CHAPTER XVI.

“Content, he taps his barrel,
Exhorts his neighbour not to quarrel;
Thinks that Churchwardens have discerning
Both in good liquor and good learning.”

WATSON.

BREAKFAST was no sooner ended than Howel, leaving Herbert to play the agreeable to Mr. and Mrs. Parry and “their daughters three,” bent his steps towards the Star, hoping that chance might once more throw him in the way of his nameless companion of the preceding night.

On arriving at the Star, he cast an anxious look towards the upper windows; but forms of most unheroine-like appearance alone met his gaze. At length he walked into the house

and cross-questioned a bare-headed damsel about the ladies that were staying there.

"Is it Lady Hopewood and her daughter you are inquiring for, sir?" asked the mistress of the Star, coming forward.

"Yes," replied Howel, at a venture.

"Then, sir, I hope you don't want to see them very particularly, for they left all in a hurry soon after daybreak this morning. Something very strange must have occurred to take them off in such a sudden way, for they had engaged the best rooms in my house for a fortnight. Not that I have any reason to complain of them for that, for they paid me more than I asked or expected.—Very handsome, was not it, sir?"

"Remarkably so," replied Howel, answering right by accident: for he was too much disappointed at finding his no longer nameless companion was gone to pay attention to the remarks of the landlady.

"And where are they gone?" suddenly asked Howel.

"I wish I could tell you, sir, for there is something very strange in the business. Why do you know, sir, they took the poor sick lady out of her bed, dressed her, and she was in her carriage before we had done wondering what could have made her send for her bill at four o'clock in the morning. I offered a bribe of a horn of ale to one of our ostlers, if he could find out from any of Lady Hopewood's servants, what was the matter, but they only said that they verily believed their mistress was taken crazy: but I beg your pardon, sir, may I ask your name?"

"Llewelyn."

"Bless my heart then, I have a letter Miss Hopewood gave me for you, should you come to inquire for her this morning. Where on earth have I put it? oh, here it is! no, this is Mr. Blunt's bill: why, I am quite like one beside herself this morning: well, I must empty out my pockets and see if it is not in one of them."

The emptying of my landlady's pockets, proved a greater trial of Howel's patience than even

her loquacity, and, to facilitate the operation, he held out both his hands to receive the contents, which were as various as those of a pawnbroker's shop; at length a letter was produced; crumpled and far from clean in its appearance, and scented, not "with all the sweets of Ataby the blest," but by peppermint; Howel hastily seized it from the hand of the landlady, and as hastily wished her good morning, and quitted the Star.

Howel, perfectly unconscious that he had excited her indignation by not reading the letter in her hall, and imparting to her at least a portion of its contents, paused on her very threshold; and, tearing open the letter, with some difficulty deciphered its contents. Lady Hopewood, it appeared, was no sooner made acquainted with all that had occurred, than she instantly determined upon leaving Holywell, and proceeding to Dublin; at which city a sister of hers held the situation of a lady abbess; and in whose nunnery, and under whose care, she intended placing herself and

daughter, for several months: as into that sanctuary neither Father Jerome nor Trevor Owen could find access. A few hurried lines from Lady Hopewood, that evidently came from the heart, concluded the letter. Howel had just commenced reading it for the second time, when a tonsured priest haughtily brushed past him, walked into the inn, and asked for Miss Hopewood's waiting woman.

"She is not here, holy Father," said the landlady.

"Not here! what business called her forth so early? but make haste and call down Lady Hopewood's maid directly, for my time is much too precious to be thrown away on a sinner like you."

The landlady not admiring this certainly far from courteous speech, determined to keep the holy Father in a state of suspense as long as possible, and observed,

"I doubt even, reverend Father, were you to call her, whether Lady Hopewood's maid would come down."

"Woman, what mean you?" exclaimed Father Jerome, all his assumed gentleness vanishing in a burst of rage, "do you mean to insinuate aught against my character?"

"Against your character, holy Father, no!" exclaimed the frightened landlady of the Star.

"But you have been made acquainted with the reason for my being forbidden the presence of Lady Hopewood," said the priest.

"No, indeed, reverend Father, I am ignorant of everything connected with her, or her sudden departure."

"Woman, you will drive me mad!" exclaimed Father Jerome, "do you mean to tell me, that Lady Hopewood is gone?"

"Gone, reverend Father, as sure as I am standing here."

"Gone!" muttered the priest, "at what hour did she leave?"

"Before daybreak, please your reverence."

"Poor deluded woman!" said the priest casting his eyes to heaven, "where, oh, where are you gone?"

"I wish I knew," said the landlady, "and so do all the servants."

"And did none of Lady Hopewood's servants drop a hint of the cause of their sudden departure?"

"Oh! no, reverend Father, they seemed to think of nothing but their mistress, and said not a word good or bad to any one. Miss Hopewood paid the bill herself, and said something about my attention; but that, I suspect, was only to bribe me to give a letter to her lover."

"My good woman, as you hope for the protection of the Virgin Mary, give me that letter: it may be the means of saving not only your own soul, but that of Miss Hopewood."

"From the bottom of my heart I wish you had come five minutes sooner, holy Father, for I gave it, just before you arrived, to Mr. Llewelyn."

The holy Father, on hearing this, stamped his foot on the stone pavement of the hall with

an energy that convinced the landlady of the deep interest he took in the welfare of Miss Hopewood, but which a common observer might have ascribed to a sudden burst of rage.

"And where," he exclaimed, "is that wretch: that Llewelyn?"

"He was standing on the steps when you came in, reverend Father."

"He was; and held the letter you have been speaking of in his hand. I might have known him by his infernal dog, which was standing by his side. But which way is he gone? If he attempts to follow Lady Hopewood, he shall not travel alone: I will cross his path yet."

So saying, he rushed out of the Star, leaving the Romanist landlady quite as indignant with Father Jerome as with the heretic Howel Llewelyn; who, totally unconscious of having offended her, walked back to the Rising Sun, where he found the poor blind boy and his mother seated at a comfortable breakfast. The

latter, having been refreshed by a night's rest, bore the misery of discovering that the water of the eye-well could not work miracles, with a composure little anticipated by Howel; and she was now not only willing to set off for Chester, but feverishly anxious to commence her journey. Howel then informed her that he had made arrangements for her leaving Holywell that afternoon; and, placing three guineas in her hand, he promised to call and see her when he passed through Chester.

The feelings of that poor woman's heart who could attempt to describe? Yesterday had seen her a miserable, houseless wanderer; to-day she is surrounded with every comfort, and, in her estimation, is become immensely rich. Her expressions of heart-felt joy and gratitude were remembered by Howel with pleasure in a distant land.

The party from the vicarage had nearly reached the church when Howel overtook them. He said not a word of his visit to the Star, but gave Mrs. Parry a full account of

the poor Yorkshire woman and her blind child ; which interested her so deeply that she declared, " although she knew Mr. Parry would give it her finely for entering that house, she would, nevertheless, run down there after morning service and see the poor woman and her dear little boy."

We remember once reading a work in two volumes, small octavo, entitled " Chapters on Churchyards," but (if our memory is correct) not one out of the number described, bore even a family resemblance to the one at Holywell, which slopes from the entrance-gate to the door of the church ; and woe betide the wearer of a new gown or coat, on a wet or frosty morning, who, on finding the bell has ceased to ring, attempts to hurry down the dangerous path : a fall being the inevitable consequence.

When our party from the vicarage entered the churchyard, shouts of laughter greeted them. This apparent want of respect for the place and the pastor was totally un-

heeded by Mr. Parry, who shook hands, right and left, with men, women, and boys, and even joined in the passing joke when he could catch its import. The astonishment of Herbert was not small on perceiving a party of men actually carrying on a game of ball against the walls of the church. On the vicar's approaching them, the game instantly stopped, and the balls were hid under a tomb-stone, in order that they might be forthcoming when wanted on the following Sunday.

Profane and indecent as such a scene would now be regarded, let it be remembered that in the reign of George I., the Bishop of London found it necessary to put a stop to the loud laughing and talking during divine service in the nave of St. Paul's Cathedral, by condemning the transgressors to forfeit twenty pounds for every offence. Now if such scenes were with difficulty suppressed in the most enlightened place in the kingdom, our astonishment will be lessened at finding this remnant of barbarism in a village in Wales;

but the titled disturbers of the congregation at St. Paul's Cathedral would probably have been as much astonished as was Herbert Gladstone at the solemn stillness which reigned throughout the church at Holywell, and the piety that seemed to fill every heart.

The effect produced by the sermon was most striking. Mr. Parry possessed a deep sonorous voice, which riveted the attention; and so powerful was the effect produced by the touching words he addressed to his congregation, that one after the other the men rose from their seats and stood with their eyes fixed upon him in statue-like attention.

That there is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous was never more correctly illustrated than on the present occasion, for the instant the sermon was ended, out of the church bustled the clerk, and jumping on a grave-stone, proclaimed, in a stentorian voice, "that there would be good bull-beef in the Mold market on Wednesday."

This announcement did not appear to ex-

cite either surprise or amusement in the congregation ; and housekeepers might be heard discussing, as they slowly walked up the steep path, the merits of different joints of beef. One old lady was, indeed, so loud in her praise of the sirloin that Mr. Parry tapped her on the shoulder, and observed, with a good-humoured smile,—

“ My dear madam, my vanity would have been more gratified had I heard you praising my sermon instead of a sirloin of beef.”

“ Your sermon was a very good sermon : at least for you,” exclaimed snappish Mrs. Evans—for her it proved to be ; “ but your wife would have it that the sirloin was an extravagant joint. Now I will maintain that it is the best and most economical in the whole animal.”

“ Very well, Mrs. Evans,” said Mr. Parry, with a sly wink at one of his neighbours ; “ I agree with you, and shall be most happy to come and eat a slice of the sirloin any day next week.”

"Man alive! Mr. Parry, and what should I do with a sirloin of beef? Nobody in my house is partial to butcher's meat, and a small joint lasts us a week."

"Then, madam, I beg to recommend a beef-steak to your serious consideration;" and so saying, Mr. Parry joined a group of his parishioners who were waiting for their pastor, doctor, lawyer, and friend: for all these characters were, in their estimation, united in worthy Mr. Parry; and they as often consulted him about the state of their bodies and their worldly affairs, as on theological points; and long after he was gathered to his forefathers, his favourite axiom of "never go to law: remember the lawyer, the cats and the cheese," was repeated in Holywell.

"Good morning to you—good morning to you, Mrs. Evans," cried Mrs. Parry, puffing and panting, "I am in a great hurry, can't stop, indeed."

"Can't stop," muttered Mrs. Evans, "who asked her to stop? Not I: only a shabby way

of getting out of asking me to dinner. I hate such ways! Why she ought to have felt obliged by my helping to eat up some of the cold meat left from last night's supper."

Mrs. Evans continued her mutterings long after Mrs. Parry was, not only out of hearing, but out of sight, happily and busily engaged in searching in "an old oak chest" for such articles of dress as she thought would be most acceptable to the poor Yorkshire woman and her child. On reaching the Rising Sun, Mrs. Parry's joy was considerably damped, by finding that they could neither of them comprehend one word uttered by the other; but the landlady proved an excellent interpreter. Mrs. Parry after selecting an entire suit of clothes, that some fourteen years before had been worn by Miss Betty Parry, proceeded to attire the clean but ragged child in them; and so delighted was she with his appearance when his toilet was finished, that she laughed for joy, and kissed him repeatedly: nor was his poor mother less delighted. A clock at this

instant striking one, reminded Mrs. Parry that the party at the vicarage were waiting dinner for her, and, hastily wishing the Yorkshire woman farewell, she ran rather than walked up the hill. She found all the party assembled in the hall, and was assailed by questions from her husband and daughters, as to the cause of her absence. Her story interested all present so powerfully, that Mr. Parry quite forgot to scold her for darkening the doors of the Rising Sun; and dinner, which was now placed on the table, was for a time unregarded: it was hardly finished, when Mrs. Parry exclaimed, "Here she comes, poor thing!" and all the party rushed out into the court. Jinkin Hughes, on perceiving his master, instantly halted. The young ladies declared that they must kiss the sweet child, and he was accordingly handed over to them. During this ceremony, Mr. Parry disappeared, but quickly returned, carrying in his hand a jug of ale and a glass.

"My good woman," he said, filling the glass

and presenting it to her, "I have heard you know what good ale is in Yorkshire; drink this and tell me whether it beats what we brew in Holywell."

A crowd of idle persons returning from the well, stopped to look at and pity the beautiful blind child; and when Jinkin Hughes, after drinking at one pull the remainder of the ale, once more proceeded on his way, the crowd followed hurrahing and wishing success to the operation about to be performed on the eyes of the poor child: their good wishes were accomplished, the child was restored to sight, and his happy mother reached her home in health and safety; and never, to her dying day, did she omit to pray for the happiness of those who had saved her from unutterable misery, and from all the privations that are most trying to the human heart.

The Steward arrived that evening, and Howel informed his hospitable host and hostess that he must quit them at early dawn on the following morning: an annunciation

that occasioned much discussion and dissatisfaction.

Before sun-rise, on the following morning, our travellers prepared to depart; but, early as was the hour, they found a breakfast spread for them, substantial enough to have served for a dinner, and all the family standing around the table to wait upon them and bid them good-by. Preparations for the sports of the day were commencing as our travellers rode through the village. Strong ropes were suspended from several houses that stood opposite to each other, and on the centre of each rope was fastened a deep earthenware pot, with a long, narrow neck. Through this narrow aperture, a luckless cock had been squeezed, who, alarmed and astonished at his novel and far from comfortable situation, might be seen poking his neck out of the small opening, and saluting the Rising Sun "with his note shrill," which was answered by several fellow-sufferers "in durance vile."

The travellers stopped to mark the progress

of the sport. Soon a crowd of men and boys advanced, each holding in his hand a pebble; one stood forth from the group and flung his pebble at the earthenware jar. It struck it, but so faintly that a slight vibratory motion was all the effect produced. A less timid hand threw the next pebble, and the jar swung violently from side to side, the poor terrified bird making many strenuous but vain efforts to escape through the narrow neck of the jar.

After many unsuccessful efforts, a pebble was discharged by an old and experienced hand; the jar was broken to pieces, and the liberated cock flew off from his tormentors, and found a place of refuge on a neighbouring roof; but before he had had time to rouse from "their lowly bed" any slumbering villagers by his "shrill clarion," the crowd were in hot pursuit, driving him from his perch on the roof with long poles, and pursuing his half-running, half-flying progress through the village with loud shouts and

boisterous mirth. The lucky youth who caught the cock had a right to retain him as his own : and strenuous were the efforts made to capture him ; but as the travellers rode out of the village, he baffled all his tormentors by flying high over their heads and perching on the top of a barn, too high to be assailed by pole or pebble ; where, as if perfectly conscious of his victory, he clapped his wings and made the air resound with his shrill crow of triumph.

As our young friends found nothing at Flint to admire except the ale, they passed rapidly through it, and hardly bestowed a glance at its castle. Nor did the much more picturesque castle of Hawardon attract them sufficiently to turn them from their road ; and they proceeded leisurely on till they found themselves on the dreary marsh of Saltney, which seemed, the farther they proceeded over it, "to lengthen on their way." But it was passed at last, and so likewise was the narrow, frightful bridge at the entrance to

Chester, without our travellers being crushed to atoms by its ruinous gateways.

Chester, with its rows, and its numerous remnants of Roman antiquities, found less favour in the eyes of Howel and Gladstone than did the range of Welsh mountains visible from the walls. They felt that they might never look upon those hills again, and with a feeling nearly allied to melancholy, they descended to the city; but an excellent dinner, which had been provided for them at the Feathers Inn—and which was accompanied by ale, so good that it might have been supposed the old law which fined every one who brewed bad had been still in force—soon banished all traces of sadness.

Their dinner was hardly despatched when a considerable bustle in the streets drew them towards a window.

"Surely," said Howel, "the Holywell wakes have followed us to Chester, or we are about to be treated with an interlude."

"No, sir," replied the waiter; "it is a

much finer sight that you are about to witness: it is the show of setting the midsummer watch."

"Say you so?" exclaimed Howel. "Often in my boyhood days have I longed to see it. Gladstone, will you come with me and witness this old custom?"

"Willingly!" said Gladstone.

"I have," observed Howel, "heard my grandfather say, that he remembered that hypocritical fanatic old Noll sending down an order for the discontinuance of the setting of the midsummer watch; but no sooner was he dead than the worthy citizens resolved to restore their favourite pageant with all its ancient splendour."

A dense crowd lined the streets, and it was a work of difficulty, as well as of danger, to push their way through it into the middle of the road, and obtain a view of what was going on.

After being squeezed till they had not sufficient breath left to complain, and having their

feet trodden upon till they were in too much pain to return the compliment, our friends agreed, if such a thing were practicable, to escape from the crowd and mount one of the flights of steps so frequently to be met with in Chester, and rest satisfied with seeing the pageant pass by. They did not reach the top of a flight of steps without receiving and bestowing many a hearty squeeze; and scarcely had they pushed their way to the top, when the marching watch, attended by musicians and standard-bearers, passed solemnly by.

The watch was composed of old soldiers, who were clad in new uniforms, and bore their arms in their hands. Following the watch were two giants, dressed in armour, and bearing in their hands the stem of a good sized tree; attending on the giants were a unicorn and a dragon: and speedily did they clear a large space around them, for the unicorn poked lustily with his golden horn at all and everything within his reach, whilst

the dragon, more furious than that of Wantley, twisted his glittering tail, composed of gold and silver leaf, and colours of every hue, around the necks of every unhappy wight that crossed his path, and then saluted them on the cheeks with his forked and fiery-looking tongue, till they roared out, "Mercy ! mercy !" to the no small amusement of those who were out of the reach of his tail and tongue.

The street having been cleared, next were seen advancing, with stern visages and glittering vests, two giants of even more imposing height than those that had preceded them; and following close at their heels, came prancing, neighing, and pawing the ground, six hobby-horses, whose gaily-worked trappings swept the ground. But the favourite figure in the pageant was, evidently, an ass, who was adorned with trappings in every respect the counterpart of those worn by the hobby-horses; and his awkward attempts at imitating their prancing and curvetting, and the loud

and discordant bray that proved him, after all, to be nothing but an ass, called forth shouts of laughter and applause from the spectators; though those who approached too near him during his curvettings, did not soon forget the kicks they received from his heels. Sixteen boys, in the costume worn by Adam in paradise, completed the pageant.

The wonder and delight afforded by this gay scene to Jinkin Hughes and his fellow-servants, was to Howel not the least amusing part of it. Jinkin Hughes, who had seen so much of life that, like Goldsmith's schoolmaster,

“Great the wonder grew,
How one small head could carry all he knew,”

was evidently anxious to conceal from his companions, that there was something “new under the sun” for him to see.

The pageant having passed by, Howel and Gladstone returned to the Feathers, taking the precaution of carrying with them their attendants, in order that they might be forthcoming when their services should be required on the following morning.

"Well now," was Jinkin Hughes's answer to Gladstone's inquiries of how he had been entertained, "it was a fine sight, but it would have been a deal better worth seeing if Billy Bangor, from Mostyn, had been here to direct the affair."

"You are a true Welshman, I see," said Gladstone, laughing, "and imagine that we poor Englishmen can do nothing properly unless we have a Taffy at our elbows to direct us."

"Taffy," exclaimed Jinkin Hughes indignantly, "is not a name for a North Wales man; what have we to do with the Taff? I have crossed it in my time more than once: why it is a river in South Wales, a miserable mill stream in comparison with the Conway. But bless my heart! half the people in England don't know the difference between a North and South Wales man: why there was one Tom Morgan in our regiment, that came from South Wales, and the soldiers would call him my cousin."

"And did you succeed in convincing them of their error at last?"

“Well, no indeed, sir, I never could, and as long as Tom Morgan lived, he went by the name of Hughes’s cousin.”

Few adventures fell to the lot of the travellers during the remainder of their journey, and late one evening they at length reached London. One of Howel’s attendants—though he did not imagine, like the German nobleman, that the town was illuminated in honour of his arrival—on perceiving the number of lamps that lighted the streets, exclaimed, “What bad consciences the people in London must have, or else surely they would not be so much afraid of being in the dark.”

There was much state, but no lack of kindness in the reception Howel received from Lord and Lady Gladstone; and we will leave him for the present domesticated under their roof in Pall Mall, and take a peep at our friends at Conway and Glyn Llewelyn.

LLEWELYN'S HEIR;

OR,

NORTH WALES.

LLEWELYN'S HEIR;

OR,

NORTH WALES:

ITS MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND SUPERSTITIONS,

DURING THE LAST CENTURY.

ILLUSTRATED BY

A Story Founded on Fact.

"I shall despair: there is no creature loves me:
And if I die, no soul will pity me."

RICHARD III.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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LLEWELYN'S HEIR.

CHAPTER I.

"The business asketh silent secrecy,
Dame Eleanor gives gold to bring the witch;
Gold cannot come amiss were she a devil."

HENRY VI. PART II.

It was market day in Conway, and old Evan might almost (like Sir Lucius O'Trigger's bird) be seen in two places at once, with such rapidity did he bustle from one butcher's stall to another, praising this joint and crying down that, with a tone and manner which plainly showed that it would in his opinion, raise or depress their value in the market. To take in Evan had been for many years past looked

upon, not only as a good joke, but a laudable action; and many an old hen, and tough joint of meat was his mistress condemned to dine upon, in consequence of the tricks played upon her conceited and somewhat obstinate old servant. On the present occasion, a very pretty girl urged him to buy a couple of white chickens out of her well filled basket.

"Who do you mistake me for, my dear?" he asked; "do you see anything in my face to lead you to fancy that I don't know what a good fowl should be like? Take my advice, carry them all back with you, feed them well for a fortnight, and then perhaps you and I may have dealings. Pray what have you the conscience to ask a couple, for these skeletons?"

"Sixpence!"

"Sixpence! oh you shocking young cheat! why I would not accept them as a gift," and Evan turned his back upon the pretty mountain maiden and her chickens, and addressed

himself to a middle-aged woman, who also held a basket of white chickens on her arm. "Well Molly y Coed (Molly of the Wood), you have seen me before to-day, and know better things than to waste your time in trying to take me in: you know that is easier said than done, so show me the best couple of chickens in your basket, and name your price."

"There are a couple of such beauties as you don't see every day," said Molly.

"Well now, indeed, they are very fat," cried Evan, weighing them first on the one hand, and then on the other. "Pray what have you the conscience to ask for them?"

"Sixpence!"

"Very good, they are mine, but I won't take them now, for I am going to look after some cheese, and will call for them presently."

During the absence of Evan, an exchange was effected between the mountain maiden and Molly of the Wood, a couple of her certainly somewhat consumptive looking chickens having

been exchanged for the fat and fair beauties selected by old Evan. Nearly an hour passed before he came to inquire for them, for having met with an old friend, he had turned in at the "Harp" just to drink his health. Now, joy at meeting with an old friend, or some other unexplained cause, had made his face shine and his eyes twinkle; and seizing the chickens, and throwing down sixpence, he was bustling off with even more than his usual alacrity, when a loud laugh from some of the spectators caused him to turn round and ask what had awakened their mirth.

"We are only laughing to think of the bare bones your mistress will have to pick for her supper the night those chickens you carry in your hand are dressed," said the mountain maiden.

"If my mistress does not declare that these chickens are fat and good, I'll promise to buy all you may bring to market next week;" cried old Evan, in an exulting voice. And

long and loudly laughed the mountain maiden.

The usual dinner hour at Plas Conway had long passed, when Evan returned with his marketings ; but forgetfulness of time was, on a market day, quite as common an occurrence with Evan as with Milton's Eve when conversing with Adam.

Mrs. Wynn remarked, "Evan, you have kept us waiting for our dinner a very long time," without adding an admonition to be more punctual in future.

"Bless me!" said Evan, on hearing this remark of his mistress's ; "how hungry you are, no doubt."

It has been observed, that we ought to consider ourselves fortunate when we find old family servants tolerably indulgent masters and mistresses. Mrs. Wynn had probably arrived at this conclusion, and very rarely took the liberty of finding fault with her major domo.

Evan at length placed the dinner on

the table, but paused often to relate some piece of news he had heard in the market. Dinner finished, he left the room, but quickly returned, and walking up to Mrs. Wynn, said—

“Beg pardon, madam, but I did not tell you I saw Llewelyn of the Glyn in the market this morning, and that he bade me say there was a letter come from Master Howel; and that he hoped you and Miss Eva would come to hear what was in it; and that it was directed to Mrs. Llewelyn, or he would have brought it here and read it to you.”

“Bless me, Evan!” exclaimed Eva, starting from her chair, “why did you not mention this when first you came in? Why, we might have been half way to the Glyn by this time.”

“Oh! I knew better than that,” said old Evan. “Did you not say you were very hungry? so I kept my news until after you had eaten your dinner, lest it should take away your appetite, Miss Eva,” said Evan,

speaking in Welsh; "but I suppose now I had better order the horses round as soon as they can be saddled."

"Certainly," said Mrs. Wynn, "and tell Peggy to pack up as many things as we shall require for a visit of a week."

Evan found some sudden difficulty in turning the handle of the lock, and stood with it in his hand till Eva's patience was quite exhausted, and she exclaimed,—

"Evan, if you do not make a little more haste, it will be midnight before we reach the Glyn!"

"If you please, madam," said Evan, looking at Mrs. Wynn, "I think myself that it will be late before you get there, and that it would be better for you to have a careful steady person with you."

"I quite agree with you, Evan," said Eva; "so pray lose no more time; and desire Tom, the groom, to get ready to attend us."

"Tom!" said Evan, in a tone of blank

dismay ; but his kind mistress took compassion on him, and said,—

“ Well, Evan, as we are not likely to meet with an adventure, I think you will do as well as Tom.”

Pedestrian travellers were not then common in Wales ; and it excited some surprise in Mrs. Wynn and her daughter, when a gentleman, wrapped up in a large cloak, and having a broad-brimmed hat placed somewhat slouchingly over his face, passed them as they were toiling up the steep ascent already described.

“ I could take my bible oath, if necessary, that I have seen that gentleman before,” said Evan ; “ but he is after no good, or he would not hide himself in that heavy cloak this hot evening, and wear his hat in that fashion.”

Mrs. Wynn was gazing on the majestic view below her, when a sudden exclamation from Eva, accompanied by a violent start, caused her to look round.

“ Eva, my love,” she asked, “ what is the

matter? such another start as that would throw you over the precipice!"

"Mother," said Eva, lowering her voice, "that man yonder is Trevor Owen."

"He cannot be, my child: Trevor would not dare to venture into a neighbourhood where he is so well known. Besides, what should bring him here? He cannot hope to obtain money either from Mr. Llewelyn, or from Eleanor. You remember how like a fiend she looked when she related to us his attempt to carry off Wenefrede: all the love she had once professed to feel for him was, evidently, changed to hate. No, take my word for it, he would no more dare to appear in her presence than in yours."

Eva remained silent, but unconvinced. Vague but distressing fears respecting Eleanor had haunted her by night and by day, from the hour in which she had visited Catryn Hén; and Catryn's visit to Eleanor had increased these fears tenfold. What could she

want with Eleanor, or Eleanor with her? Eva's only hope was that "Time," that babbler of many a secret, would tell.

On arriving at the Glyn, they found Mrs. Llewelyn standing in the hall, reading, for the third time, the letter from her son. Her pleasure at seeing her visitors was great, and, after kissing Eva as affectionately as she would have done her own child, she begged that they would be seated, and forthwith commenced reading aloud the precious document; but before she reached the bottom of the first page she paused, and, with a most motherly look of satisfaction, asked, "If out of a book they had ever met with so well-written a letter?" She addressed herself to far too partial an audience to fear being gainsaid, and, with sparkling eyes, and cheeks glowing with delight, she went on to the next page; but in the middle of a most interesting paragraph she paused, and exclaimed,—

"Oh, dear me! only to think of my having

forgotten my promise of letting Mr. Llewelyn be by when I read Howel's letter to you. Well, indeed, now, what is to be done?"

"Something very difficult," replied Eva, smiling; "two women will keep a secret; and we will look the picture of ignorance when you read your letter the second time."

"Thank you, a thousand times, my dear Eva, and Mr. Llewelyn shall read the whole of the letter to you; and he reads so much better than I can that I wonder I ever thought of spoiling this beautiful letter by reading it myself."

Supper-time soon arrived, and brought with it Mr. Llewelyn, who made himself very merry at Eva's expense; rallying her, without mercy, on the punishment he had inflicted on her by forbidding Mrs. Llewelyn to read a word out of Howel's letter, except in his presence.

"But you shall be rewarded by-and-by, my love," he added, patting her glowing cheek,

“by hearing one of the best letters that ever was penned.”

As the servants were leaving the hall, Mr. Llewelyn called to them and bade them stop, in order that they might hear a letter which had just arrived from their young master. It was written in English, but he would, he said, read it to them in Welsh. Mr. Llewelyn then turned towards the side-table, and, in a voice that showed that he intended the deafest of his audience should hear him, commenced reading. For some time he went on fluently; but at length he blundered over a sentence, and, throwing the letter on the table, exclaimed,—

“Confound it, how I am spoiling my poor boy’s letter. I wish to goodness that I had taken it to the rector, and got him to translate it into Welsh for me.”

Mrs. Wynn whispered a slight alteration, which made a wonderful improvement, and Mr. Llewelyn, snatching up the letter, finished

it much to his own satisfaction. All the servants were remembered, many by name; and when this part of the letter was read, a "God bless him" was heard from every mouth at the side-table, and an "Amen" was fervently responded by the party at the high table. The concluding sentence of the letter called forth a burst of applause, that rang long and loud through the hall; for in it Howel said Sir Richard Wynn of Gwyder, when in Spain, remarked, in one of his letters to his father, that the kingdoms of Castile and Arragon were not worthy of one of our worst countries, but that he would go a step further, and say that he would not exchange Glyn Llewelyn for all he had seen of England. The most interesting paragraph in the letter to Mrs. Llewelyn, Wenefrede, and Eva, was the one that announced the speedy departure of the young soldiers for Germany.

Mrs. Wynn brought with her a letter from Lady Gladstone, in which she stated that

neither she nor Lord Gladstone would throw any rocks in the way to prevent the course of Herbert's love running smooth ; but that they could not consent to his entering into an engagement for a year or two, both he and Miss Llewelyn being, in their opinion, much too young to marry at present.

" Very true," said Mr. Llewelyn, " they are mere children."

" I was only eight months older than Wenefrede when I was married," sighed forth Mrs. Llewelyn, " and this state of doubt is a very sad thing for her poor child."

Eleanor said nothing, but her thin lips curled with indignation. At length Mrs. Llewelyn, who was on all occasions most anxious to conciliate her, asked what she thought of Lady Gladstone's letter ?

" You ask me, madam, what I think of Lady Gladstone's letter. I always, as you are well aware, speak my mind, and I must say that it strikes me her ladyship would be

truly rejoiced if the act passed by Henry the Fourth, disfranchising any Englishman who married a Welsh woman, were still in force; her ladyship having apparently forgotten that, when a penniless Welsh girl, she thought *that* no obstacle to her becoming the bride of Lord Gladstone."

"Hark back, hark back, Eleanor," cried Mr. Llewelyn, "you forget before whom you are saying all these pleasant things." Mrs. Wynn only smiled, but Eva, hastily seizing her embroidery frame, prepared to leave the room, with sparkling eyes and glowing cheeks, and holding the door in her hand she addressed Eleanor in these words:—

"Now, Miss Llewelyn, you may abuse my aunt to your heart's content, for lest my presence should interfere with the abuse I know you are longing to heap upon me, I shall leave the room."

Mr. and Mrs. Llewelyn followed Eva, and Eleanor turned pale with rage on hearing her

name pronounced amidst peals of laughter in the inner hall. Mrs. Wynn remained at her work-frame, looking as calm as if Eleanor had not spoken. This calmness provoked Eleanor ten times more than Eva's sudden burst of passion had done, and she remained sullen and silent for the rest of the day. The day after Eva's arrival at the Glyn, she determined to perform her promise to Catryn Hên of paying her a visit ; but a party of friends arriving just before dinner, and remaining for many hours after it was over, obliged her to delay her visit till late in the evening. The last walk Eva had taken with Howel had been to the hut of Catryn Hên, and her mind was so completely occupied with tender recollections of him, that she did not observe that the path was steep, or the bridge she had to cross slippery and dangerous ; and, in happy forgetfulness that the world contained any human being except Howel and herself, she reached the door of the hut.

“ My dear love !” exclaimed Catryn, starting

up from her low chair the instant she observed Eva, whose hand she grasped between both of hers, "then you were not mocking the poor old woman when you said you would come and see her; and she wronged you when she thought it: but if you had not come how could I have blamed you? for has it not been said of me, that I had all the signs of one whom God had left and hardened."

"But I had never discovered those signs Catryn, and so I ventured to come and see you: and now tell me how is your son?"

"Well, quite well, bless you for thinking of him; he is gone down to the Glyn to his work again, and he only comes home on a Saturday night."

Eva looked around her, and thought how dreadful it must be to spend day after day in perfect solitude, in this wild dreary spot.

"And so Tywysog went with the young squire after all," said Catryn, in a voice of delight that astonished Eva; who imagined

that she would have been well pleased to have heard of his death, or to have seen him stewing in a large earthenware pan that was standing on the hearth.

Eva soon observed that, great and unfeigned as was Catryn's delight at seeing her, she was more than usually restless, and was constantly looking in the direction of the door, and evidently listening to hear if any one was approaching; for more than once she started and asked, "Did you not hear footsteps?"

The night was fast closing in, and Eva, after presenting Catryn with a gay silk handkerchief, arose to depart; but, before she quitted the hut, she "screwed her courage to the sticking-place," and, looking steadfastly in Catryn's face, said,—

"Catryn, did you ever see Trevor Owen?"

"Trevor Owen, Trevor Owen!" repeated Catryn, as if trying to recollect if she had ever heard of any person of that name. "Trevor Owen! is he one of the Owens of Bangor?"

"No," said Eva; "the Trevor Owen I wish to talk to you about is a Montgomeryshire man."

"Bless you, my dear child! I know nothing about people in Montgomeryshire. Why, I never travelled farther than Conway in my life. But stop a moment; the man you are talking of I rather think I have heard of. Was not he the nephew of the first Madam Llewelyn; and did he not try to carry off 'pretty Miss Wenefrede,' as they call her?"

"Yes, yes," replied Eva, eagerly.

"Well, then, I will tell you a secret, my dear;" and much to Eva's alarm, Catryn drew close up to her, and whispered in her ear, "I wish Trevor Owen or the devil had carried her off, and then my poor grandson would have escaped all the misery he went through for several weeks; but," she added, looking beseechingly in Eva's face, "if you have any pity in your heart, you will not let my wild

words frighten you, but will soon come and see me again."

Eva trembled from head to foot; but answered, in a courageous voice, "I will come and see you often, if I can do you any good."

"You can do no good to my soul, if that is what you mean, my poor child: for that there is no hope, I was told so long ago; and it was true, quite true. I had sold it, before you were born, to the evil one."

Eva said she knew not what, in answer to this remark; but made a secret determination never to visit the hut in future, except in broad daylight. Catryn followed her as she was leaving the hut, and looked anxiously down the Glyn.

"What is that yonder?" she asked, eagerly, pointing down the Glyn with her staff, to a dark object that had attracted her attention.

"It is only a rock which projects a little over the path," replied Eva. "But, Catryn, are you expecting visitors at this late hour?"

"What made you fancy that I expected any one?" asked Catryn, fiercely. "And if I do, is there anything to astonish you in that?"

"Yes, indeed, there is," said Eva, assuming a courageous manner, that was strangely at variance with her beating heart, "when we consider the dangerous state of the bridge, and the risk that any one would run who crossed it in the dark."

"Very true," replied Catryn, with so shrill a laugh that Eva started; "and yet I have many a nightly visitor, who, besides the fright in crossing the bridge, has to pay a double fee: for that's my rule with all that consult me after sun-set. I ought to be very fond of sinners, they pay so well. Why, if all the world was good and innocent, like you, poor child, the gold in my purse would not weigh much; so if I had a cup of ale by me, I would drink long life to the wicked."

Eva gave an involuntary shudder, which

Catryn instantly perceived, and, laying her long bony hand on her shoulder, said,—

“Dear child, do not tremble; I would not hurt a hair on your head for all the gold in the world. But come, take my arm; I will see you safe over the bridge, which, as you say, is very dangerous to cross after night-fall.”

During their short walk to the bridge, Catryn stopped more than once and looked down the steep path below. She said nothing to Eva, but muttered, more than once, to herself, “No; they will not come to-night.”

Eva had crossed the bridge in safety, and wished Catryn good-by, when she heard her calling after her, and bidding her, should she meet any one coming up to the hut, pass by them as quickly as possible.

“I will,” replied Eva, at the same time quickening her pace. She had no real cause for alarm, she argued with herself, for however wicked might be the visitors evidently ex-

pected by Catryn, they would not dare to molest her; but, nevertheless, her pulse beat quicker than usual, and she started more than once, on perceiving a dark shadow at a distance, which her fears transformed into an immensely tall figure, but which, on approaching, she discovered to be only a projecting rock.

Eva was neither superstitious nor timid; but when the moon suddenly sailed forth above the tops of the mountains, lighted up the wild, desolate valley with its cold rays, and imparted to the grey rocks a ghastly hue, she felt as if it would have been very delightful to have had some one at her elbow, to whom she might have observed, "how beautiful is night!" She looked around her; but neither friend nor foe was to be seen: indeed, "all was so still in earth and air," that she thought the vale must have been "swept by the besom of destruction;" when, suddenly turning round a large projecting rock, she

encountered two persons, a male and a female. Remembering the warning given her by Catryn at parting, she walked hastily past them; but notwithstanding her haste and trepidation, she caught more than one glance of Catryn's nightly visitors. They were both remarkably tall, and both muffled up in long riding cloaks, and with large hoods drawn far over their faces.

Eva, having passed round the projecting rock, paused to fasten her cloak, and, whilst thus engaged, she heard her own name pronounced. A voice, that she instantly recognised to be that of Eleanor Llewelyn's, replied,—

“Yes, it is Eva Wynn; but what can have taken her to the hut at this time of night?”

“Can Catryn be playing us false?” asked her companion.

“She dare not; and besides ——;” but the remainder of the sentence did not reach Eva.

“I have heard that voice before; but when,

or where, I cannot recollect," said Eva, to herself. "Yet that deep but soft voice is familiar to my ear. Good heavens!" she exclaimed, every pulse in her body throbbing violently; "it was the voice of that villain, Trevor Owen. Oh! what would I not give to know what business takes him to the hut of Catryn Hên!"

At a short distance from the hall, Eva met her mother, Mrs. Llewelyn, and Wenefrede, coming in search of her. After she had stated where she had been, Mrs. Llewelyn exclaimed,—

"I declare to you that I would not, for all North Wales, have paid Catryn Hên a visit at so late an hour, or walked down that valley alone. Why, it is not an hour since one of the shepherds went a short way up it to look for a lamb; and what should he see but two unnaturally tall figures, standing by a rock, and all at once he lost sight of them; and he says that they must have vanished away, for

that they could not have walked off without his seeing them. Now, if there are no spirits haunting that vale, I am sure there are many very bad people who go up it at night to consult that horrid old woman, and I should be frightened out of my senses if I met any of them."

Mrs. Wynn and Eva occupied the same chamber, and as soon as they had retired to it for the night, Eva eagerly asked,—

"Mother, when did you last see Eleanor?"

"Four or five hours ago: she then complained of suffering from a bad headache, and went to her own room; at supper-time Jane Pierce came down to say that her mistress was too unwell to make her appearance, and that she had gone to bed, and begged she might not be disturbed. But why do you ask, Eva?"

Eva related her adventure.

When it was told, Mrs. Wynn asked if she was positive it was Eleanor she had met.

"In the sound of her voice I could not be mistaken, ma'am."

"Eva," said Mrs. Wynn, "I need not tell you that I am no mischief-maker; but I feel that I should not do as I would be done by, if I concealed this extraordinary circumstance from Mr. Llewelyn. My only fear is, my love, that Eleanor may extend to you her resentment of my interference in her concerns."

"Do not think about me, dear mother," exclaimed Eva; "and, indeed, few things would give me greater pleasure than to have this strange business thoroughly investigated."

Neither Mrs. Wynn nor her daughter felt inclined to sleep, and they lay awake, talking over Eleanor's mysterious conduct, on more than one occasion, till long after midnight.

At length, Mrs. Wynn was just dropping asleep, when she was awakened by Eva's springing out of the bed, and exclaiming,—

"Good heavens! what is the matter?"

“You have been dreaming, my dear,” said Mrs. Wynn. “I hear nothing.”

“Oh! no, indeed, ma’am, it was no dream. I heard the hall door opened, and an instant after followed a loud scream.”

Eva was hastily dressing herself whilst she was speaking. Another scream, and another, and another, convinced Mrs. Wynn that Eva was no dreamer; and, throwing her dressing gown about her, she followed her daughter into the long gallery. There they found several of the female servants, who had been frightened out of their sleep by the screams, and were running down to the hall in great alarm, and in somewhat similar attire to that of the statues that once adorned the groves of Blarney. But each one of the party was too much frightened to be critical about her own or her companion’s attire.

CHAPTER II.

“Then must I seek another home,
My license shook his sober dome;
If gold he gave, in one wild day
I revell'd twice the sum away.
An idle outcast then I stray'd,
Unfit for tillage, or for trade.”

SCOTT.

WHEN the party reached the hall, a strange sight met their view. A solitary lamp was burning on the high table, the flickering light of which served only to exhibit the dark gloom around; and whilst the beams of the moon, which fell through the large middle window, lighted up the centre of the hall, the lower end remained in perfect darkness. On the moonlit part of the hall stood Eleanor, Trevor Owen, and Mr. and Mrs. Llewelyn.

Mr. Llewelyn held Trevor Owen firmly grasped by the throat; and Mrs. Llewelyn was wringing her hands and screaming loudly for assistance. Screams and shrieks so often repeated had at length reached the ears of the men-servants; and, in a short time, a crowd of the domestics had assembled in the hall.

And how came Mr. and Mrs. Llewelyn to be in the hall at such a late, or more correctly speaking early hour?

That is easily explained. Mr. Llewelyn was much in the habit of taking a nap after supper, and not unfrequently dozed away for hours in his arm-chair, long after all the household had retired to rest. Such had been the case on the present occasion, and Mrs. Llewelyn, waking up just as the clock struck one, and finding no Mr. Llewelyn by her side, thought it her "bounden duty" to proceed forthwith to the hall and give him a "rousing shake."

She found him seated in his arm-chair, with his head thrown back, and mouth wide open, and giving utterance to loud, deep, and continued snores. Mrs. Llewelyn screamed in his ear,—

“Well, now, Mr. Llewelyn; is not this a pretty time of night for you to be out of your bed?”

“Ye—s, v—e—r—y,” he replied, slowly opening his eyes, and gazing at her with a “lack lustre” look in them. But he quickly closed them again, turned a little on one side, placed his head comfortably on his hand, and commenced snoring, as a musician would say, *da capo*.

“Well, indeed, if this is not too bad,” cried Mrs. Llewelyn, with a smile on her countenance. “I really must try what a good shake will do next.”

No sooner thought of than done, and Mr. Llewelyn, in a sleepy tone, exclaimed,—

“That will do, thank you, my dear: I will come directly.”

But a tremendous grunt gave the lie to this promise; and Mrs. Llewelyn was saying, in a voice of perplexity, "What shall I do next to awake him?" when she heard the hall door open. She felt neither surprise nor alarm, imagining it was opened by one of her servants, who was returning from a wake in the neighbourhood.

The darkness which enveloped the lower end of the hall prevented Mrs. Llewelyn from seeing, for a minute or two, who it was that had entered; but when, instead of a dairy-maid or a cow-boy, she beheld two tall, stately figures, wrapped up in dark cloaks, walking towards her, she uttered a scream so shrill that it even roused Mr. Llewelyn from his sleep; and he started up, rubbed his eyes, and asked, in an angry voice, "What the deuce was the matter?"

"Matter! Mr. Llewelyn; why don't you see, sleepy as you are, what is the matter? Why, Eleanor, whom we all thought sick in

her bed, has just come in at the entrance-door, and has brought a strange man with her."

"A pretty time of night, truly, for a daughter of mine to be abroad with any man!" exclaimed Mr. Llewelyn, in a rage. "And who are you?" he demanded of the stranger, in a voice of thunder.

No answer was returned.

"Speak and that instantly; or I will tear off that vile masquerading cloak of yours, and save you the trouble of telling me."

Mr. Llewelyn was unquestionably of the same opinion as that class of persons mentioned by Lord Cherbury, "who having fire within doors, choose rather to give it vent than to suffer it to burn the house," and allowed his passion to escape on all occasions like steam from a safety valve. In the present instance he was justified in his own opinion, not only in being "as free as he pleased with his tongue," but with his hands

also, and, rushing forward, he attempted to seize the stranger by the collar of his coat; who springing back to elude the grasp, his hat, which had been placed so forward on his forehead as completely to conceal his face, fell off, and gave to view the handsome but jesuitical features of Trevor Owen.

"Villain! wretch! viper!" exclaimed Mr. Llewelyn; "get out of my sight; get out of my hall, or I will run this pike," seizing one from the wall as he spoke, "through your vile body."

Trevor Owen required no farther hint, but, with a measured step, walked towards the door.

"Move faster, or I will make you," called out Mr. Llewelyn, in a voice that might have excited the envy of Stentor, and running at the same time (pike in hand) many paces towards Trevor Owen. The next instant the hall door closed with a startling crash.

"Heaven be praised!" exclaimed Mr.

Llewelyn, "that I did not run this pike through him;" and, throwing himself into a chair, he drew a long breath. "And now, madam," he added, turning towards his daughter, "I should like to know what you have to say for yourself: no good, I can answer for it, if you tell the truth."

"Sir," said Eleanor, "it ill becomes a magistrate to condemn any one before hearing what can be urged in defence; and it would still less become me to bring disgrace upon the honoured line to which I belong, by allowing my nearest relation on my mother's side to starve, whilst I am revelling in luxury."

"You are growing vastly charitable in your old age," observed Mr. Llewelyn, with a sneer; "but pray, madam, how dared you, with all your charity, bring that scoundrel of a cousin of yours into this hall? Had not I given strict orders to every one belonging to me to hang, drown, or shoot him, the first

time they caught him on my property! Zounds, madam! if you have no regard for my feelings, you might have a little for **your** own character."

"Woe betide man, woman, or child, **who** ventures to breathe a word against it. But I will go to bed, now, sir; and to-morrow, **when** you will probably be less feverish than you are at present, we will talk over this unpleasant business," said Eleanor, walking, with well-assumed calmness, towards the door.

"Does the impudent baggage mean to insinuate that I am in a passion? And suppose I am,—I should like to know if any man **ever** had a greater right to be in one."

"No, sir; certainly not," replied Eleanor, opening the side door.

"Stop! stop! madam: you do not go **till** you have told us for what purpose you **were** bringing that fiend of a cousin of yours **in** to my hall to-night."

Eleanor returned no answer, and ~~Mr.~~

Llewelyn, in language that "ears polite" will thank us for not recording, repeated his question.

Eleanor, then, assuming the look of an injured person, said, "shelter having been refused to her cousin at every house and hut for miles round, that she had at length conceded to him the *mighty boon* of passing the night on a chair in the hall.

"His betters have often slept under a bank. Pooh! pooh! Eleanor, that tale won't do, I am not quite the old fool you take me to be; but we will go to bed now, and talk this matter over to-morrow."

Eleanor walked even more majestically than usual up the grand staircase, followed by Wenefrede, who evidently wished to be invited into her bed-room; but Eleanor closed the door somewhat hastily in her face: a very decided hint that her company was not wished for. Mrs. Llewelyn, who was most anxious to know what Mrs. Wynn and Eva thought

of this strange affair, followed them to their room.

"Who knows," exclaimed Mrs. Llewelyn, after ascertaining that the door was closed, "but that Trevor Owen pretended that he had no bed to sleep in, just to get into this house, to run off with my poor Wenefrede."

Mrs. Wynn considered this by no means an improbable conjecture.

"But where is Wenefrede all this time?" said Eva. "O! I hear her talking to Jane Pierce."

By-the-by, Jane Pierce was not in the hall.

"No, I missed her, and Grace Jones told me she was out of humour about something; they did not know what, and staid up stairs all the evening," said Mrs. Llewelyn.

"She must have been deaf as well as sulky," observed Eva, "or the commotion in the hall would have brought her down stairs; but I suspect that she was exemplifying the saw of

‘none so deaf as those who won’t hear,’ and that the fear of being cross-questioned about her mistress’s absence kept her away from the scene of action.”

Wenefrede at this instant entered the room, and Mrs. Llewelyn, telling her to go to bed and not keep Mrs. Wynn awake with her chattering, left it; but Wenefrede seating herself at the foot of the bed, remarked,

“If I were not afraid of you laughing at me, Eva, I would confess that I am half afraid of going to my own room, it is so large and gloomy; I often think of asking my mother to let me change it for this, which is small and cheerful.”

“How tastes differ! Now your room, in my opinion, is by far the most comfortable in the whole house; so, if you please, you shall remain here with my mother, and I will take possession of your bed.”

“Oh! thank you, dear Eva, you are kind, for I know that fright would have pre-

vented my closing my eyes, if I had lain down in it."

Eva had been asleep for several hours, when her slumbers were disturbed by the sudden opening of the door of the room. Sleepy and tired, she did not ask "who is there?" but remained perfectly quiet with her face nearly concealed under the bed-clothes. Steps approached the bed, and a low voice asked if she were asleep?

"No," replied Eva, without lifting up her head; "do you want any thing?" for, sleepy as she was, she was well aware that it was Eleanor who was speaking to her.

"Yes, I have something that concerns you deeply to tell you; but you must promise me never to repeat to a living creature what I am going to say."

"You mistake me for Wenefrede," said Eva, sitting up in the bed and looking Eleanor, who uttered an exclamation of surprise and displeasure, full in the face.

"And where," she asked, "is Wenefrede?"

"Sleeping with my mother."

"Simpleton! of what was she afraid?" but, without waiting for an answer, Eleanor left the room.

Mr. Llewelyn had a private interview with Eleanor that morning; and most excellent and praiseworthy did she contrive to make her conduct appear. Even her visit to Catryn Hên (which she had the policy to mention) she turned to good account; assuring her father that love for her cousin had taken her there, though it was the last spot on earth that she would willingly visit.

"Her unhappy cousin," she said, "was, alas! in the power of Catryn Hên, in consequence of owing her a large sum of money, for secret services which she had lately threatened to expose to the whole neighbourhood, if the money was not sent by a certain day.

Trevor had not a friend on earth to whom

he could apply for a loan of the sum he required except myself, sir," said Eleanor, "and I am convinced, had you been similarly situated, that you would have acted as I did, and advanced the money."

"Well, well, there is no saying, perhaps I might; but go on, Eleanor, I don't quite understand your story yet."

"Catryn Hén cannot write, sir, and Trevor Owen wished me to be present when he paid the money; and as he dared not appear by daylight, I promised (with what reluctance you may imagine) to accompany him last night."

Eleanor, in short, contrived to convince her father that she was blameless in this affair; and they parted mutually pleased with each other.

Could Mr. Llewelyn have known how deeply implicated was Eleanor in many of Trevor Owen's not particularly respectable transactions, it would have "sent his grey hairs

with sorrow to the grave;" but he died in happy ignorance of the many evil deeds that pride and avarice had led her on step by step to commit. To account for the influence possessed by Catryn Hên over Eleanor we must indulge in a little retrospect.

During the first fourteen years of Eleanor's life, she had been looked upon as the heiress of the Llewelyns. She was from an infant proud and tyrannical. These evil passions were encouraged instead of checked by her worldly-minded mother; and at twelve years of age she was heard to declare, that power and wealth were the only things worth living for, and that she would rather die than lose either the one or the other. Her mother died, and she appeared hardly to regard the event, so completely was her heart filled with the delight of being mistress of Glyn Llewelyn. But her reign was not destined to be of long duration, for scarcely had the year of mourning for her mother ended, when, during a

visit that she was paying to a cousin in Chester, she received a letter from her father, which announced his intended marriage with Miss Tudor. Eleanor was in her own room when this letter was brought to her by Jane Pierce, who, little guessing its contents, looked with alarm at her young mistress's countenance, which was rendered actually frightful by rage. After reading the letter Eleanor tore it into a hundred pieces, and starting up, trampled them under her feet, exclaiming, in a low unnatural voice,—

“Would I could trample under my feet all who dare to interfere with my prospects, as easily as I can this paper!” and she stamped upon it in impotent rage.

Jane Pierce entered most warmly into her young mistress's indignation, and declared that it was most cruel of Mr. Llewelyn to place so young a wife above her head. “And I have not a doubt,” said the consoling Jane, “that she will have a dozen boys!”

"You will send me mad, Jane! Can nothing be done to prevent this abominable match from taking place?"

"Yes," exclaimed Jane, in a joyful voice, "something can be done; we must return home to-morrow, and consult Catryn the witch: she will think of something, I warrant her."

To this scheme Eleanor was, not without great difficulty, brought to give her consent; but at last her resolution gave way, and she set off for the hut of the witch, unattended even by Jane Pierce. Eleanor imagined that she had adopted a disguise which no eye could penetrate; and, fearless of detection, held out her hand, and desired Catryn to tell her fortune. But her tall, commanding figure, and a peculiarity in her tone of voice that she could not quite disguise, betrayed her instantly to Catryn, whose success in her unlawful calling depended in a great measure on the quickness of her eyes and ears; which

had from habit acquired such extraordinary acuteness, that a figure once seen, or a voice once heard, was never forgotten. Taking Eleanor's hand, she said in a coaxing tone,—

“ Poor dear young lady! a dark cloud is arising in the west : your bright prospects will soon be darkened ; and it is strange, but true, that a very fair object will occasion all this gloom.” In a strain similar to this Catryn continued to speak for a considerable time ; contriving, by hints, and figures of speech, to convince Eleanor that she was acquainted even with her most secret wishes. Eleanor repented having placed herself in her power ; but to retreat now was not practicable, and she was obliged to allow the fortune-teller to retain her hand. Catryn did not promise Eleanor a hundred lovers ; but, on the contrary, assured her that she would be regarded as a mighty queen, and that few would dare to speak to her of love. “ But,” was Catryn's concluding remark, “ there is a certain fine

old hall, that is of more value in your sight than ever lover was or will be: with that first and only love shall you live and die; and yours and yours only shall it be!"

"You are deceiving me, Catryn; another will shortly occupy my place in the hall; and should she have a son, he will usurp it for ever."

"Mark my words,—yours only shall it be."

Eleanor, for intelligence so soothing to her ambition, presented Catryn with a piece of gold; the first ever offered to her by her numerous visitors.

On Eleanor's mind Catryn's last words seemed to work like a benumbing poison, and to paralyze every Christian feeling in her heart. Little did Catryn, when she uttered those words (which she was tempted to do by the expectation of the great reward), imagine that the hope of seeing them fulfilled would lead her youthful votress from crime to crime.

Eleanor concealed her visit to Catryn, even

from Jane Pierce. She returned to Chester, and was not present at the marriage of Mr. Llewelyn and his second wife.

A short period before Howel was born, Eleanor again visited the hut of the witch, and inquired whether the expected baby would be a boy or a girl. Catryn boldly answered, "A boy:" but added, "fear not that the birth of a son shall endanger your possession of the hall; for yours, and yours only, shall it be."

The birth of Howel, which speedily followed, served the more firmly to convince Eleanor of Catryn's supernatural powers; and, in darkness and secrecy, she continued to visit her, to consult her when any illness common to childhood attacked Howel. Catryn's knowledge of medicine was great: she not only was acquainted with the virtues "of every herb that sips the morning dew," but could converse as learnedly as Solomon himself about the hyssop that springeth out of

the wall; and she was enabled to answer with such correctness the anxious inquiries of Eleanor, as led the latter to look upon her and tremble.

Years passed on; and though nothing occurred of a nature to induce Eleanor to consult Catryn as an oracle, yet she frequently visited her hut: for Catryn's grandson was the messenger employed by Trevor Owen on all secret occasions, and also entrusted by Eleanor to carry letters backwards and forwards between her and her cousin, after the latter had been forbidden to appear in the Glyn.

Years passed on, and many overtures of marriage were made to Eleanor. All were rejected: but that her heart was not dead to all feeling was evinced by the love she entertained for Wenefrede. From her earliest days Wenefrede was a beautiful and engaging little child, and frequently, when seated on

Eleanor's knee listening to a nursery tale, Mr. Llewelyn has looked at them with tears in his eyes.

Eleanor having determined to make Wenefrede her heir, resolved at the same time that she should marry Trevor Owen; and Eleanor, Catryn Hên, and her grandson, were deeply implicated in the plot already described for carrying off Wenefrede.

After the failure of this scheme, Trevor Owen quitted Wales, and tried to redeem his fallen fortunes by running off with Miss Hopewood. Eleanor urged him strongly to take this step, as it would prevent his again claiming Wenefrede's hand; and for her she now entertained hopes of a more splendid alliance.

Eleanor, like many other designing people, found herself at length entrapped in the snares she had set for others, and was obliged to pay large sums of money to Trevor Owen, Catryn

Hên, and her grandson, to keep her secrets; and thus, Eleanor, who thought the ground she walked on honoured by her touch, was led, by her pride, to commit acts that would have rendered her despicable in the eyes of the meanest servant in her father's hall.

From one or two hints dropped by Trevor Owen, Eleanor was led to fear that he had by no means relinquished all hope of carrying off Wenefrede; and it was to place her on her guard that she paid a visit to her bed-room, when she found it occupied by Eva.

On the following day, Eleanor called Wenefrede into her room, and presented her with a watch, which had long been the object of her highest ambition. The watch was received with tears of delight and gratitude; and Eleanor then, with the subtilty of the serpent, introduced the name of Trevor Owen, and her fears respecting him.

“Now, my dear Wenefrede, as it would be sad indeed,” said Eleanor, in a melancholy voice, “that his unconquerable love for you should again bring him under my father’s displeasure, I would recommend your never leaving our own grounds alone: and remember your promise of never mentioning to a living creature a word of this conversation.”

“I repeat my promise,” said Wenefrede, with a sigh. But “with her concealment weighed like sin,” and she felt, after leaving Eleanor, that she would have given the world to have been able to throw herself on the breast of her mother and tell all that had passed.

Wenefrede had some vague fears of being carried off like heroines of old, and shut up in a ruined castle, with no better society than that of rats, spiders, and a one-eyed, horrid old woman, to whose care she was to be consigned; but they were happily dissipated by

learning from Eleanor that her dreaded admirer had taken refuge in the Isle of Man : a spot at that time celebrated for being the abode of rogues, vagabonds, smugglers, and tailless cats.

CHAPTER III.

"Now joy, old England, raise,
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities' blaze,
While the wine-cup shines in light."

CAMPBELL.

DAYS passed on: the twelfth of August arrived, the battle of Blenheim was fought and won by the Duke of Marlborough; and in due time the glorious news found its way to Glyn Llewelyn.

Now our peace-loving readers need not fear our making their blood run cold, or their hair stand on end, by an account of the "deeds of arms" performed by our young heroes, or of their victims,

"Deep in the tide of their warm blood lying,
Scorched with the death thirst and writhing in vain."

As we are not gifted, like Homer and Walter Scott, with the power of rendering a battle-scene interesting, "naught say we here" of the glorious feats performed by Marlborough, Eugene, and a host of warriors: and this being "the proper time and place," we will honestly confess that we envy them not their fame; that although we have "heard of battles," we never "longed to follow to the field some warlike lord;" and that even had there been "no vile guns," we should not have been a soldier. Honourable mention was made of Howel Llewelyn and Herbert Gladstone in the papers of the day: which might be briefly enumerated; and this victory, which added another hero to the pedigree of the Llewelyns, was celebrated by the assembling of cousins ten times removed, and friends from every point of the compass: those who came from Merionethshire and Montgomeryshire making their wills before they set out on their journey. Like the "fine old English gentleman," Mr.

Llewelyn "ne'er forgot the poor;" and the humblest of his dependants might be seen on this occasion mingling with the high and mighty of the land. But not a single servant or near neighbour of the Llewelyns would drink to the health of the Duke of Marlborough: no—they declared, and most tenaciously adhered to their declaration, that he had nothing to do with the victory at Blenheim, and that the thanks of the nation were only due to Howel Llewelyn. Now this was also Mrs. Llewelyn's opinion, and she named it to Mr. Llewelyn, who exclaimed,—

"Pooh! pooh! nonsense, my dear!"

But however nonsensical Mr. Llewelyn might consider the idea, it was evident that it was not displeasing to him; and he observed to Eva,—“Though all these praises don't quite belong to him now, who knows but the time may come when the cap will fit, and I may, before I die, have to give place to my son the Lord Duke?”

Eva's cheeks flushed and her eyes sparkled when the praises of Howel fell upon her ear, and she would willingly have bestowed a kiss upon every ugly old crone that joined in the cry of "God bless our young master!" The darkest nook in the hall was on this night brilliantly lighted up; dozens of harps were struck by "masterly hands," and sounds of joy and gladness rang through its proudly arched roof till long after midnight; and all went "merry as a marriage bell,"—except to the ears of Eleanor: to hers' the music sounded out of tune; and she felt, however gay and exhilarating the scene might be to others, that for her "the trail of the serpent was over it all."

The news of the victory, coupled with the addition that it had been gained by Howel Llewelyn, reached the hut of Catryn Hên; and when she perceived the lights from the hall illuminating the vale below her, she determined to show her affection for Howel; so

dragging outside her hut her bed of straw, she set it on fire: the blaze spread far and wide, and was seen and admired by many a shepherd watching his flock by night, and who little imagined that it was the bed of Catryn the witch that produced the flame. Catryn slept that night on the floor of her hut; but on the following day a feather bed might be seen on the bedstead, and a handsome chintz counterpane spread over it. Now, last it should be imagined that bed and counterpane were a gift from the same gentleman who is reported to have provided a celebrated preacher with a pair of leather inexpressibles, we think it right to state that bed and counterpane were a gift from Mrs. Llewelyn; who was so greatly delighted on hearing of the enthusiasm Catryn had displayed, as to forget that she was a reputed witch; and even accompanied Eva and the bearers of her present to the hut. Catryn was so much affected by this mark of condescension and kindness, that tears started

into her eyes, and for some minutes she could not utter a word.

"Bless me!" said Mrs. Llewelyn, as she was returning home with Eva, "what stories people have told me about Catryn! Why, instead of being a dreadful old woman, I should say she was a very good sort of a body. If I had thought of it, I would have asked her what really brought Eleanor to her hut that night; for I don't believe all that fine story she told her father."

During supper, Mrs. Llewelyn asked her husband to guess which of her neighbours she had been calling upon that afternoon. Mr. Llewelyn named all the most improbable persons within a circuit of several miles; at length his patience being quite exhausted, he exclaimed,—

"Well, my dear, I'll be hanged if I can think of any one else; unless, indeed, you returned Catryn Hên's call."

Great was Mr. Llewelyn's astonishment on

finding that such was the case ; but when he learned the occasion of the visit, a tear was just visible in either eye ; and desiring all present to fill their glasses, he gave the health of Catryn Hén. In the enthusiasm of the moment, the toast was drank in bumpers ; no one calling to mind that it was the health of Catryn the witch that they were treating with so much honour ; but after old Roderic had quaffed off the ale and thrown down the cup, he exclaimed,—

“ I do not know that we should have done worse if we had drank the health of the evil one.”

“ Well, Roderic,” said Mr. Llewelyn, laughingly, “ I cannot say that I ever heard the old gentleman’s name given as a toast ; but I do believe I have drunk the health of some who were nearly as bad as he is said to be.”

Months rolled on, and nothing of any particular interest occurred either at Glyn Llew-

lyn or Plas Conway. The absent heroes had been placed on the staff of the Duke of Marlborough; and after attending him during his negotiations, which ended so successfully at Berlin, they had shared in the marks of distinction showered upon him at Hanover and the Hague. All was strange and new to our young friends, and they expressed their delight in "the spirit-stirring scenes" in which they were engaged, with all the enthusiasm of youth.

"There," said Mrs. Llewelyn, throwing on the table one morning a joint letter from Howel and Gladstone, whilst the tears started to her eyes, "I said long ago how this soldiery-business would end. Neither Howel nor Master Gladstone will care two straws about poor Glyn Llewelyn when they come back."

Eva and Wenefrede tried to say a word or two in defence of the absent.

"Well, my dears, only read that letter, and

see how different it is to the two first we received : they were nice, comfortable letters, filled with sorrow at leaving us, and inquiries for all friends, and love and remembrances to your father, and all of us ; now this letter ends with 'I have not left room for love.' And why did not he say less then about that Prince—"

"Prince Eugene," said Eva.

"Yes, well that is his name ; but as I never heard of him till Howel met him at the battle of Blenheim, I can't take much interest in him or his concerns. I had rather have heard that Howel had not taken cold this very trying autumn ; but I hope, from something he says in that letter, that he is likely to come back from foreign parts this winter, and I won't mind what any body says, but I will keep him at home with me."

Little did Howel imagine that a letter he had sat up the greatest part of a night to write, would occasion, instead of pleasure, "grief of heart" to his mother ; or that she

would, for the first time in her life, speak harshly of him on the receipt of it. Could she but have read every secret thought of his heart, she would have discovered, that though at times his mind was dazzled by the scenes of glory and splendour that surrounded him, and that amongst "his fellow-men," war and honour seemed alone to occupy his thoughts; yet in "the deep watches of the night" his heart would fill with soft emotions: then he forgot "that honour's eye's on daring deeds," and longed for wings that he might fly to Glyn Llewelyn, and behold once more, Eva, his mother, his father, and all that he really prized on earth.

In the month of December the Duke of Marlborough arrived in England, and in his train might be seen Howel Llewelyn and Herbert Gladstone. The wildest enthusiasm, —the most deafening shouts greeted the procession at every town or village through which it passed on its way to London. But who could

attempt to describe the roaring of cannon, the ringing of bells, the waving of handkerchiefs, and "the madness of the people," who made "the welkin ring" with their shouts when the triumphant procession arrived in London, and "the conquering hero" rode slowly through the streets? Howel Llewelyn and Herbert Gladstone laid "the flattering unction to their souls" that the Duke was not "the observed of all observers;" but that occasional glances of admiration fell on them. But as the firing of cannon, ringing of bells, and hurrahs of the mob were called forth by the hero of Blenheim, and not by our heroes, we will leave them to the reflected glory that fell to their share, and take a peep at Glyn Llewelyn: which, judging from the confusion that pervades it, has been strangely frightened from its propriety since we last paid it a visit.

All seems bustle and confusion: not one of the servants is to be found in their proper place; and even old Roderic has deserted his

high-backed chair in the hall. And what has occasioned this unwonted confusion in an establishment managed in general with the regularity of clock-work? Why the premeditated journey of its master and mistress to London. We think we hear a young lady, who has breakfasted in London, and supped the same day in Brussels, exclaim, "What nonsense! why, what bustle or confusion could the family moving to London for the season occasion in a large establishment like the one at Glyn Llewelyn? why, there was nothing to be done, but to order the ladies' maids to pack the imperials, carpet bags, and bonnet boxes, and to send the plate to the bankers."

Imperials, carpet bags, bonnet boxes, and we believe we may include bankers, were at this period alike unknown in North Wales; and so great were "the terrors that did environ" a journey to London, that next to the birth, marriage, or death, of a man,

it ranked as the greatest epoch in his life; and one from which all subsequent events were to be dated. A man who had really been in London was looked upon as no ordinary person; and his remark of "that is what I heard in London," was considered as good authority as the law of the land: he was consulted as an oracle, till his news ceased to be listened to in consequence of one of his neighbours having braved the same dangers, and seen the same sights as himself in the great metropolis, bringing down news of a later date, perhaps by a year or two, than his.

Such being the state of affairs, no wonder the preparations for the journey to London of Mr. Llewelyn and his family should occasion bustle and confusion at the Glyn, and excite the surprise and interest of their acquaintances.

"Bless me! my dear Mrs. Llewelyn," exclaimed a near neighbour, "and can it be true that you are going to London?"

"Yes, Mrs. Roberts, quite true; but I must

say I feel a little frightened when I think about it in the night time."

"Well, indeed, I should wonder if you did not: I, for one, shall say good-bye to you for ever, I feel so sure you will never live to come back again. Dear me! what could put such a thing into your head?"

"Why, you see, my dear Mrs. Roberts, Mrs. Wynn and Eva are going to stay with their grand relations, the Gladstones; and they sent a very genteel invitation to Wenefrede, begging her to accompany them. Now Eleanor, who manages everything here, said Wenefrede must go—but not with Mrs. Wynn, and if there was no one else to take her, that she would; and at last she persuaded her father that he ought to go too. He said, 'Well, Eleanor, with all my heart; for why should not I talk of the sights in London as well as Squire Hughes, of Cefn. So, remember, this day fortnight we start.' But," exclaimed Mrs. Llewelyn, her words rendered

all but unintelligible with laughter, "had you but seen Eleanor's face, when her father tapped me on the shoulder, and said, 'But my love, I won't stir without you; and Eleanor has proved so clearly that it would not be proper for Wenefrede to go without me, I am sure she will, with less trouble, convince you that you ought to make one of our party.' Eleanor looked as if she wished the earth would open and swallow me up; but it did not oblige her, and so here I am still alive, to spoil her sport in London. I know very well that she thinks I shall disgrace them, because I am not a stylish-looking person, and have not had so grand an education as some people; but I can tell her one thing, which is, much as she thinks of herself, that I consider myself quite as good as she is. Yes," said Mrs. Llewelyn, laughing again, "and I should be ashamed of myself if I did not think that I was much better."

Mrs. Llewelyn was quite right in her con-

jectures touching Eleanor's anxiety to keep her at home. Eleanor feared that her appearance and manners might injure the favourable impression that she felt Wenefrede's beauty and simplicity were certain of producing; and she tried, by representing the dangers they were likely to encounter on the road in a most exaggerated shape, to frighten Mrs. Llewelyn from undertaking it: but her plan totally failed; for Mrs. Llewelyn, after listening most attentively to all she said, replied,—

“ I had much rather stay at home, and had indeed made up my mind to do so; but, after all you have told me, I should not be comfortable to remain here. No, if there *really* is so much danger in the journey, I will share it with my husband and child; and I will go directly and order Molly Davies to lay all my dresses out on the bed, and then Wenefrede and Eva shall come and choose which of them I shall take with me: my crimson velvet I

should think would be handsome enough for anything,—handsome enough to call upon the queen in."

"Undoubtedly, madam," said Eleanor, with a sneer.

The sneer, if noticed, failed to excite the anger of Mrs. Llewelyn, who was soon busily engaged with Molly Davies in dragging out of dark closets large chests that had evidently been left to their repose for many a long day; for cobwebs and dust had not only "marked them for their own," but rusty locks and hinges gave forth most discordant sounds when an attempt was made to open them. Of a most heterogeneous description proved the contents of these old oak chests: satin dresses, that had graced the tall stately figure of Mrs. Llewelyn's grandmother, and velvet dresses that had descended from mother to daughter, from generation to generation, were mixed with point-lace and antique head-

"Have you the key of this black box, ma'am?" said Eva, dragging it out at the same time from a corner of the last-explored chest. "I am dying with curiosity to know what it contains."

Eleanor, at this instant, after giving a most imposing knock at the door, entered the room; and before Mrs. Llewelyn had had time to answer Eva's question, she came up to the chest, and in her usual cold, formal manner, said,—

"I am come in quest of some point-lace without which a dress we are preparing for Wenefrede will be incomplete."

"Take the piece you like best,—there are several lying on the bed," said the 'good-humoured' Mrs. Llewelyn; and then turning to Eva, she remarked,—

"My love, you asked me for the key of that black box; now I really don't know where it is at this instant, but I can tell you what is in it—diamonds: they belonged to my

grandmother. I never had them on but once since I have been married, and that was at Howel's christening; and glad enough I was to take them off at night; for I had heard so much of their value that I was frightened out of my senses, fearing I might lose a bracelet or an ear-ring."

"Pray, madam, try to recollect where you keep the key," said Eleanor, with unwonted urbanity. "You may remember that illness prevented my being present at the christening of *your* son, and I consequently never saw your diamonds: I should much like to have a sight of them now."

Mrs. Llewelyn searched in every place that she could think of for the key, and at length recollected that it was attached to a bunch of keys that were in Mrs. Grace Jones's possession. The key was sent for, the black box opened, and its contents examined and admired; and Eleanor, who was considered a good judge of diamonds, exclaimed,—

"I hope, ma'am, that you will take these beautiful diamonds to London with you, and have them reset; they will then be a most suitable wedding present for Wenefrede."

"No, no, Eleanor; Wenefrede must be satisfied with a less valuable present. These diamonds I have for years past intended for Howel's wife; and this is the neck I hope will set them off," said Mrs. Llewelyn, placing the necklace on that of Eva's.

Eva, anxious to see how she looked when adorned with costly gems, cast her eyes on a large mirror that stood nearly opposite to her; but she forgot the diamonds on beholding Eleanor's countenance reflected in the glass: it was black as midnight, and she darted a glance at Eva that made her blood run cold; but suddenly turning from the box of diamonds, Eleanor busied herself with the point lace; and after selecting by far the most valuable piece, she left the room.

The most proper dresses for Mrs. Llewelyn's

London expedition had not only been fixed upon, but packed up, when an unexpected obstacle to the journey presented itself in the person of Molly Davies; who declared that she would willingly lay down her life for her mistress, but that she could not go with her to that "wicked London," for that if she did, she was quite certain it would not only be the death of her but of her poor mother.

Mrs. Llewelyn looked very grave on hearing that should she insist on Molly Davies accompanying her, she would probably be the cause of two deaths; and instantly set off to Eva's room, to ask her if she really and truly believed that their journey was so full of danger as Eleanor and the servants seemed to apprehend.

"My dear Mrs. Llewelyn," said Eva, smiling, "pray do not let those who are anxious to keep you at home, succeed. Eleanor, for reasons best known to herself, has tried to frighten you out of the journey; and has

ordered Jane Pierce to try her eloquence upon poor Molly Davies: but leave her to me, and I will soon talk her out of her absurd fears."

"I would leave her at home with all my heart," said Mrs. Llewelyn, "for I cannot see any use in being plagued with a waiting-woman; but Mr. Llewelyn says I must take her to keep up my respectability. My respectability! as if the wife of Llewelyn, of Glyn Llewelyn, required anything to keep up her respectability!"

With so many "chimeras dire" had Jane Pierce filled the mind of the simple Molly Davies, in order to frighten her out of undertaking the journey to London, that Eva found it a more difficult task than she had imagined to persuade her to accompany her mistress; but at length Molly declared her willingness to go.

The morning on which the party from the Glyn were to set off on their journey arrived; and Mr. Llewelyn, having repeated ten times

over his orders to steward, butler, gardener, and groom, and having kept the party waiting for him upwards of an hour, might then be heard calling from the bottom of the principal staircase in a loud impatient voice,—

“Mrs. Llewelyn! where in the world are you? Why we ought to have been half-way to Conway before this.”

No answer was returned.

“Eleanor! Wenefrede! what are you thinking about? If you are not down in less than a minute's time, I'll go without you.”

Still no answer; and Mr. Llewelyn, in high dudgeon, marched up stairs, calling out—
“Jane Pierce! Molly Davies! I'll give it you when I catch you!” But he found all the rooms usually occupied by the family empty, and on descending once more to the hall, to his surprise and vexation he discovered that he was the loiterer, and that the rest of the party were already mounted on horseback.

“My dear!” cried out Mrs. Llewelyn, as

soon as she perceived her husband standing at the door of the hall, "we are all quite tired of waiting for you."

"Well now if that is not a good joke, my dear," retorted Mr. Llewelyn. "Why I should have been here ten minutes ago if I had not had to hunt for you all over the house. Well, Griffith, good-bye! women have no patience, or else I had several things I wanted to say to you before I started. Oh! yes, I must——"

"Sir," said Eleanor, "you are forgetting how short the days are, and that there is no moon, and that if we do not make haste, we shall not reach Abergeley before it is dark."

"Bless me! what more haste can I make? Am not I mounting my horse?"

True; but, like John Gilpin, "he soon came down again," exclaiming, "Hang it! I quite forgot to tell Griffith to give Cymro something for his cough."

"The mother did fret and the daughter did

funne," but still to the stable went Mr. Llewelyn. Now impatience has "a microscopic eye," and not unfrequently magnifies minutes into quarters of hours. Such was the case on the present occasion, and Mr. Llewelyn was informed on his return that his absence, which had not exceeded five minutes, had been of three times that length.

Mrs. Wynn and Eva had already set out on their journey; but our party from the Glyn found a handsome dinner prepared for them at Plas Conway. Mr. Llewelyn had an aunt residing at Chester: a maiden lady, old and rich, and blessed with but two ideas, namely, that of her own consequence and wealth; but as she lived in great state, and cousins even to the most distant of her race were welcome to partake of it, they overlooked the paucity of her ideas, and took up their residence at her house whenever business or pleasure took them to Chester; and consequently Mr. Llewelyn and his family, without announcing

their intention of paying her a visit, rode up to the door of Aunt Anne's house on the evening of the third day after they had left the Glyn. Now on Aunt Anne discovering that Mr. Llewelyn intended his family should perform their journey to London on horseback, she turned pale with indignation, and exclaimed,—

“Times are changed, cousin Llewelyn! and let me tell you, if you do not consent to your wife and daughters going in proper style, I shall take care that they shall neither disgrace themselves nor me, and keep them in Chester?”

“But, madam, if they do not go on horseback, in the name of St. David! how are they to go? On foot?”

“This is no joking matter, cousin Llewelyn; the honour of the family is at stake! No, sir, they shall go in my coach.”

“Never rode in a coach in my life, and I doubt whether it will agree with me,” said Mr. Llewelyn.

Now this offer of aunt Anne's coach proved agreeable to all interested in it, and every thing was speedily arranged to the satisfaction of all, from Eleanor down to the fat coachman : who, with his four fat horses, was ordered to be in readiness by a very early hour on the following morning. Aunt Anne, after her guests had eaten their breakfast, strongly urged their setting off immediately, for she was quite certain that coachman and horses would take cold were they not safely housed before sunset; and she added, "A journey of sixteen miles will be a hard day's work for them poor animals: and pray, nephew, scold John Jones well if he drives fast."

The old family coach drove up to the door: it was a heavy lumbering affair; but, nevertheless, it was a coach, and the Llewelyn arms were conspicuously emblazoned on its broad sides, and the harness of the four fat long-tailed horses glittered with silver stags; and,

altogether, "the turn-out" wore a most imposing appearance. Not only the five females, but Mr. Llewelyn found "ample room" within side of the coach; and had Mr. Llewelyn been a little less corpulent, and Eleanor a little more accommodating, eight persons instead of six might have found "room and room" enough: but it was better as it was, for Mr. Llewelyn was not obliged to squeeze himself into a corner, nor Eleanor to desire her next neighbour not to crush her. For some time all went on very pleasantly; but a thick mist turning to a cold drizzling rain the window next to Mr. Llewelyn was obliged to be pulled up. Mrs. Llewelyn was seated opposite to her husband, and with her back to the horses; and in a short time husband and wife looked "unutterable things" at each other; at last Mr. Llewelyn exclaimed,—

"Well, hang me if I can bear this any longer!" and he hastily let down the window; "I must have a puff of fresh air, or I shall die.

Bless my heart! what a confounded fool the man who first thought of such a horrid contrivance as this for travelling in must have been; why I feel as if I were nothing better than a sneaking tailor: truly the ninth part of a man, boxed up here with five women, who look as if they had got the ague, and the cold fit was upon them."

"And the ague we shall have in reality, sir," said Eleanor, "if you do not draw up that window."

"The deuce take it, Eleanor, I only wish you felt as uncomfortable as I do, and then you would not grudge me a breath of fresh air; but if you will take Jack Hughes inside, I will gladly mount his horse, and Jack, I dare say, will not ask to have the window down."

The whole party gradually grew more pale and silent, and when, after toiling through six weary miles of sand, the fat coachman proposed halting for an hour or two to rest his fat horses, not a dissenting voice was heard; and Mr.

Llewelyn opening the coach-door, jumped out, uttering at the same time a loud hurrah !

" Eleanor," said Wenefrede in a low tone, " do you think that Lady Gladstone keeps a coach ?"

" Of course she does."

" Oh, what will become of me?" exclaimed Wenefrede in a most melancholy voice, " I am quite sure that I shall be sick the first time I go out with her."

" Nonsense, child, you will get accustomed to the motion of a carriage long before we reach London."

" I hope I may," said Wenefrede, with a deep sigh.

" Now for ten miles more of penance," said Mr. Llewelyn, throwing himself into the corner of the coach which fell to his share ; " and the gout seize the man who built this horrid, shabby, unnatural thing for travelling in."

" Indeed I can't say that I find it very

pleasant," observed Mrs. Llewelyn, trying in vain to smile.

"Pleasant!" retorted Mr. Llewelyn, "why, if you do not find it confoundedly unpleasant, my dear, I must say I envy you."

Sand, sand, nothing but sand offered itself to the view of our weary travellers; for Delamore forest was not then planted, and a dreary waste "of no good repute" lay between Chester and Sandayway head. Towards the close of the sixth day after our travellers had left Chester, the fat coachman suddenly stopped, and knocking with his fist against the window next to Mrs. Llewelyn, said—"There's London, madam."

"Bless me!" said Mrs. Llewelyn, "you must be mistaken; why I see nothing but a parcel of black chimneys through a yellow fog, which makes me feel quite sick."

Molly Davies drew back her head at the same instant from the opposite window, and in a voice of woe exclaimed, "And have I left my

own beautiful country, and run the risk of being robbed and murdered, to see such a dirty place as that yonder !”

“ I told you how it would be, Molly Davies,” said Jane Pierce ; “ I knew you would repent coming.”

It was dark when the party found themselves *bond fide* in London ; and the fat coachman lost his way repeatedly. The streets were at this period very badly lighted, but had they been illuminated with gas it would still have been darkness visible, so impenetrable was the fog that filled the streets and houses.

After tramping up one street and down another, running foul of two or three coaches and as many drays, and being within an inch of upsetting, the party—tired, cold, and dispirited—at last reached their lodgings : there they found Mrs. Wynn and Eva. Thick curtains shut out the sight of the fog, a large fire blazed in the grate, and a number of wax lights set off the handsome furniture with which

the room was filled to the best advantage, and offered a most agreeable contrast to the gloom without.

After giving Mrs. Wynn and Eva a hearty salute, Mr. Llewelyn wheeled a large arm-chair exactly opposite to the centre of the fire, seated himself in it, placed a foot on each hob, and rubbing his hands together, exclaimed, "Now if I had but my jug of ale and my pipe, I should say it was possible to be comfortable even in London."

Eva and Wenefrede retired to a corner of the room, and from the multitude of questions asked, and the innumerable histories which were related, it might have been imagined that they had a twelve months', instead of a twelve days', budget of news to discuss.

"I am not aware that any of us are deaf, Wenefrede," said Eleanor, as Wenefrede in a merry voice was relating some most excellent joke about aunt Anne's fat coachman.

"Do leave her alone, Eleanor," said Mr.

Llewelyn ; " I can't hear a word that is said in that corner, but when I hear them laugh I can't help laughing too."

" Supper, supper," cried Mrs. Wynn, who hated family jars.

" A bowl of flummery, I do declare," cried Mr. Llewelyn. " Ah, Miss Eva, I have to thank you for this unexpected treat, I can see by your blushing so deeply."

" I thought of it, sir, but Peggy made it : she said she was afraid it would not be eatable, for that the poor English people did not know what good buttermilk was."

Supper ended, Mrs. Wynn and Eva arose to depart, and the latter begged hard to be allowed to take Wenefrede with her. Mrs. Llewelyn readily assented ; but Eleanor, drawing herself up, appealed to her father to prevent a step so derogatory to her sister's dignity. " Let her wait at least till Lord and Lady Gladstone have paid their respects to her and to us, and not let them have

it to say that Wenefrede was forced upon them."

" Well, well, Eleanor, don't work yourself into a rage, for I think Wenefrede is too tired to go anywhere to-night, and will look more blooming to-morrow."

Wenefrede was not sorry for this short reprieve, for she dreaded her first interview with Lord and Lady Gladstone more and more every minute; and the thought that they would not like her was constantly harassing her; but she, nevertheless, slept soundly, after expressing her astonishment that any person could be so foolish as to walk about the streets, calling out, " past eleven o'clock, and a rainy night!" Nor did any of the noises that so often "murder sleep" early in the morning in London rouse her from her dreams: she heard not the dustman's bell, or cry of "dust, dust ho!" or the shrill cry of "milk below!" or the call of the Israelitish purchaser of old clothes, who was early abroad

seeking whom he might cheat. Heavy wag-gons, carts, and drays rolled noisily on their way, and she heard them not: but when, at length, she did open her eyes, she was most agreeably surprised by seeing Eva seated near the bed, engaged with some work which, judging from the earnestness with which she prosecuted it, was of no ordinary importance.

"Oh, my dear Eva!" she exclaimed, "how did you get here? I thought you told me ladies never walked about alone in London, and that they never got up early in the morning."

"Oh! I came in my aunt's chair; and I had a strong inducement to get up early, I——"

"Oh, you came in your aunt's chair, Eva!—ah, I remember now all you told me about the sedan-chairs;—well, but what could induce you to get up so unfashionably early?"

"Nothing more or less than to have the honour of acting as your tire-woman; for you must know that Mrs. Llewelyn commissioned

me to order an entire new wardrobe for you, and I am anxious to see whether the dress in which you are to be presented to my uncle and aunt is becoming: last night I discovered a strange blunder had been made in the size of the waist, and at the instant you awoke I was busily engaged in rectifying it; but look at the dress," said Eva, holding it up before the eyes of Wenefrede, "and tell me what you think of it."

"It is beautiful!—much too beautiful for me."

"Herbert would say that it was not half beautiful enough for the beautiful figure it was to have the happiness of covering," said Eva, laughingly.

"Pray, Eva, do not talk of Herbert, for I feel convinced that he has fallen in love with some German lady, and quite forgotten me and Glyn Llewelyn. You cannot imagine what pains I take not to think about him."

"That is the sure way to think about him

from morning to night," said Eva, smiling and blushing. "I remember determining not to think about Howel, before he made his offer,—and what was the consequence? I thought of him ten times more than I had ever done before."

Wenefrede's toilet was just completed when Mrs. Llewelyn and Eleanor entered the room, both anxious to set off to the greatest advantage the little country girl who, they hoped, would one day or other figure in the peerage. Eleanor was so well pleased with Wenefrede's appearance that, holding out her hand to Eva, she exclaimed,—

"Miss Wynn, I thank you!"

Early in the day Lord and Lady Gladstone arrived, and Wenefrede, to her no small comfort, discovered that a lord and lady were, after all, mere human beings. Even Eleanor was satisfied with the respect paid to her and her father by Lord and Lady Gladstone, and the kindness shown by them to Wenefrede.

Though there was much state and form observed in Lady Gladstone's drawing-room, yet there was no lack of amusement when Eva and Wenefrede were alone; and gaily and happily the days went by with them. But for the hope of seeing their son, Mr. and Mrs. Llewelyn would immediately have returned home; for, after spending a few days in London, they discovered that smoke and noise did not agree with them,—that there was no fun in a London tragedy,—and that an interlude at a wake at Conway was much more amusing; and as to all the fine singing Lady Gladstone took them to hear, why they could hear better any day in the week in their own hall. In short, the only amusement that really called forth their approbation, was the exhibition of a man who imitated “the horses, the huntsmen, and a pack of hounds,—a sham doctor, an old woman, a drunken man,—the bells, the flute, the double cartell, and the organ with three voices, by his own natural

voice." The imitation of the huntsmen and the hounds was so perfect that Mr. Llewelyn forgot it was not a real fox-chaise, and starting from his seat, he waved his hat around his head, and cried out most lustily, "Tally ho! tally ho!—for though I don't, I am sure the hounds do see the fox."

CHAPTER IV.

"Oh! thou wilt come no more!
Never—never—never—never!"

KING LEAR.

BUT we have left our heroes shivering in the cold a most unconscionable time; for though the morning on which they made their triumphal entrance into London was remarkably bright for the season of the year, still the "sun that shone so cold" might have been described by the duke's attendants quite as feelingly as by the idiot boy, for they were kept beneath its December rays, hemmed in by the crowd, till they looked more like petrifications than conquering heroes.

Howel had turned his head to speak to a gentleman, who was riding close behind him, when he heard a well-known voice exclaim in Welsh,—

“Bless us all, if that is not our young master, God bless him !”

In utter astonishment, Howel looked towards the window whence the voice came, and beheld not only the necks and shoulders, but more than half of the remainder of the bodies of Molly Davies and Jane Pierce stretched out of it. Their loud and often repeated exclamations of delight, uttered in “an unknown tongue,” attracted general attention, and caused some to smile, and some to sneer ; but neither smile nor sneer was regarded by Howel, and, taking off his hat, he bowed most kindly to his countrywomen.

“Look at his hat and feathers ! look at his coat !” screamed Molly Davies, in an ecstasy of admiration. “Well, indeed, now, if he is

not better worth looking at than all the sights in London put together."

"Gladstone!" said Howel, in a voice almost inarticulate from emotion, "my mother—my father are in London, and perhaps Eva."

"And your sister, oh! where is she? surely not left by herself at Glyn Llewelyn?"

"Oh! Eleanor is quite old enough to take care of herself," said Howel, with a smile.

"Nonsense, Llewelyn! you know well enough to which of your sisters I allude. Oh! how much I wish I had been at her side when she arrived,—how much I envy—"

A sudden halt in the procession caused Gladstone to halt in the middle of his speech.

It was very late in the day when the young officers were released from their attendance on the Duke of Marlborough: so late that all hope of seeing them that night had been given up by the impatient party assembled at Lord Gladstone's; when, unannounced, they

walked into the drawing room. Such a scene of crying and kissing as followed was probably never performed before, except in a German play. Mr. Llewelyn, in the exuberance of his delight, declared that he would have a kiss from every lady present ; and even Lady Gladstone allowed him to touch her cheek with his lips.

The party was just becoming rational when into the room bustled old Evan, in a state of great excitement.

"Why," he exclaimed, in Welsh, "you have been more than an hour in this house, Master Howel, and I did not hear a word about it from those stupid English servants!"

"But, Evan," said Howel, trying to look grave, "how did it happen that you were not in attendance this afternoon on your own countrywomen, at my father's lodgings? for an old soldier like you might have explained many things, as the procession passed by, that must have sorely puzzled them."

"I should like to shake Jane Pierce," exclaimed Evan, passionately. "Why, will you believe it, Master Howel, if I give her a word of advice she tells me to mind my own business, and that she knows as much of the ways of the world as I do. For my part I hate such knowing people, that I do, in my heart."

"But your hatred of Jane Pierce, Evan, does not account for your not joining the crowd which assembled to see the immortal Duke of Marlborough pass through the streets. I imagined that you would have cut quite a figure on the occasion, and would have tossed your hat so high with joy as to have lost sight of it for ever, and shouted Marlborough and Blenheim, till you lost your voice for a month."

"I never got sight of the duke, or anybody worth seeing all to-day," replied Evan: "never was more disappointed in my life;" and, looking to the door, he made his exit.

"I think," said Eva, "that I can explain the real cause of poor Evan's disappointment: as usual, he felt convinced that nobody knew anything correctly but himself, and declared that it was quite impossible that the duke would pass through the streets named; and so he walked a mile or more in a wrong direction, and consequently never even caught a glimpse of the procession."

Mr. Llewelyn remained ten days in London after the arrival of his son, and then announced that Christmas was near at hand, and that he must return home.

"Do not say so, my dear sir," exclaimed Lord Gladstone. "You positively must eat your Christmas dinner with us: we cannot, we will not, allow you to leave us so soon."

"Oh! my dear lord, you are very good. I feel much obliged to you; but I have kept a merry Christmas at Glyn Llewelyn for the last forty years, and, with God's blessing, I will keep one there as long as I live."

"But surely, my good sir, you can send a line or two to your steward and housekeeper, and order a dinner to be prepared for all your poor people, as usual, and you can remain with us."

"No, that will not do, my lord ; there would be no real pleasure or fun at the Glyn, if my wife and I were not there : so go we must, for the sake of our neighbours."

"But your daughter, Miss Wenefrede ; you will leave her with Lady Gladstone and Eva : they will be charmed with her company."

"My lord," said Eleanor, "Lady Gladstone has already made a similar proposal ; but on my representing to her that, as no engagement was allowed to exist at present between her son and my sister, it would be much more correct for her to return home with her parents, she withdrew her request."

"Lady Gladstone is certainly a better judge in such affairs than I am ; but I have grown quite fond of pretty little Wenefrede, and

should be very happy to see her married to my son to-morrow ; and I cannot see why the wedding should not take place before he leaves England."

"No sir, no ; they are both too young : it will be better for your son to see a little more of the world, and my daughter to learn a little more of housekeeping, before they talk of marrying."

Mrs. Llewelyn, though she said nothing, like a celebrated parrot, thought the more, and wondered that a sensible man, like her husband, should talk such nonsense.

"Bless me!" said she, in her soliloquy ; "why, Wenefrede already knows quite enough about housekeeping for a fine lady : for what good would her being able to manage a dairy be to her in London, where nobody keeps a cow or knows what the taste of good milk is ? For anything that I can see, Lady Gladstone troubles herself as little with her preserves and pickles as the queen does."

But all Mrs. Llewelyn's wise thoughts were of no avail; and poor Wenefrede, with a reluctance visible to all, seated herself, on the sixteenth of December, in one corner of aunt Anne's commodious coach, and bade adieu to London, and (more distressing still), to Herbert Gladstone. Mrs. Llewelyn was most unusually vehement in her abuse of the Duke of Marlborough, who would not allow Howel to accompany her home.

"An ill-natured man! I only hope he may have a son of his own some day, and that the queen will forbid his spending his Christmas with him," were the concluding words of her speech.

"By Saint David, I begin to feel as if I could breathe again!" exclaimed Mr. Llewelyn, letting down the coach window next to him—after leaving London fog and smoke several miles behind him—and inhaling the clear, frosty air with as much satisfaction as he had ever done his favourite fumes of tobacco.

Wenefrede appeared to have fallen asleep; but evidently did not enjoy "pleasant dreams and slumbers light," for her breast heaved, and tears rolled down her cheek. Poor girl! she certainly deserved pity; for she had not only left Gladstone, but Eva Wynn behind her, and she felt as if each time the ponderous wheels revolved on their axletree, that they carried her a few paces further from love and happiness.

"My dear Wenefrede," at length exclaimed Mrs. Llewelyn, "how very uneasy your sleep is! What did you take for your breakfast?"

"Nothing, ma'am."

"Nothing, my poor child! Do you hear that, Mr. Llewelyn? Pray order something very nice to be got ready at the first inn we stop at."

"With all my heart, my dear; for to tell the truth, country air has made me confoundedly hungry."

Aunt Anne was delighted to see the whole

party return in health and safety ; but it was very evident that the fat coachman and his four fat horses, were neither "last nor least" in her thoughts.

Not having been present at the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel, we do not feel equal to the task of describing the noise and the unintelligible chattering which greeted the Llewelyns on their arrival at home. From the dairy-maid to the harper, all imagined that (unlike the needy knife-grinder) they had "a story to tell:" every servant, not only talked, but expected to be listened to; and Mrs. Llewelyn stood amongst them till she was ready to sink on the floor from fatigue. At length some of the servants left off talking, and condescended to uncord packages, and to arrange the luggage. From one package which had been appropriated to the purpose, Mrs. Llewelyn produced a present for every servant in the household, sent them by their young master as a Christmas gift.

"And who is this warm cloak for?" said Wenefrede.

"Oh! that is for Catryn Hên: only think of Howel's thinking of her! but I suppose," added Mrs. Llewelyn, "that I must take it to her myself, or she will not get it."

"I will take it with pleasure, madam;" said Jane Pierce, stepping forward.

"But how is this, Jane Pierce? I have got to the end of my son's presents, and I find nothing for you. Here, Molly Davies, is a gown ticketed with your name, smart enough to turn your head."

Jane Pierce, with a smile, replied, that "she had a much handsomer gown to show, which had been presented to her by her young master himself."

"Very pretty goings on, upon my honour!" said Mr. Llewelyn, laughing.

But Eleanor considered it no laughing matter, and in a stern voice asked Jane Pierce

how she could think of accepting a present from so young a man?

Jane Pierce did not answer this question; but Mr. Llewelyn, whose eyes were fixed upon her, fancied he could see a faint smile curl her long narrow lips. Eleanor left the hall, and Mr. Llewelyn indulged in what is styled a horse laugh: how it acquired the name we are quite at a loss to imagine, never having heard of any animal, excepting a hyena, that was known to indulge in a laugh; a dog, all the world knows, never advances beyond a grin: but this is an important subject, quite out of our line, and we must leave it in the hands of the zoologists.

The usual hospitality and noisy mirth which had welcomed in old Christmas to Glyn Llewelyn Hall for upwards of a century, was (if such a thing were possible) outdone this year; Mr. Llewelyn making his month's absence from home an excuse for all imaginable and unimaginable hospitable extravagance.

Mrs. Llewelyn laughed much, talked much, danced much, but still it was no merry Christmas to her; for her son, whose presence would have made her think a prison gay, was absent: she could not quote from Hamlet, but she felt that without her son the world was "stale, flat, and unprofitable," and for the first time in her life she saw the last of her Christmas guests depart without regret.

Nor was Wenefrede more happy; and after watching Mr., Mrs., and the three Misses Lloyd (who had remained several days after the rest of the company had departed) till they reached the bottom of the Glyn, she hurried to her own room, quite delighted with the idea that now she might be as miserable as she pleased.

And how had Howel passed his Christmas? Why, in love-making and gaiety; but he was a true Briton, and his heart was filled with longings to share in the revels of his father's hall: for one country dance there, even had his partner been Jane Pierce, he felt that he

would gladly have relinquished the honour of attending a court ball, and dancing with the lovely Duchess of Marlborough.

On the 13th of March, 1705, he was once more summoned from "love to glory," and embarked with the Duke of Marlborough and Herbert Gladstone for Holland. "Nought say we here" of the crossing of the Maese by the troops of the Duke, or of the journey he afterwards took to Crewtynach, to which place he went to confer with Prince Louis of Baden; for all the events that occurred there, and the disappointments that followed on the Moselle, are matters of history, and are in no way connected with the private adventures of Howel Llewelyn. For the same reason we pass over a long list of "glorious deeds" performed during the summer in the Netherlands, and take up our history after the duke and his staff had arrived in Vienna: which event occurred on the 12th of November, 1705.

In high health and spirits our young friend

entered this city, which was so famed for its fascinations and gaiety, that had that prince of hypocrites, Mahomet, passed near it, he would have turned away from it, and said as he did of Damascus,—“ I will not enter the fair city, it is too delicious.” Amusement alone appeared to be the vocation of the inhabitants of this pleasure-loving capital. Ball succeeded ball, and masquerade succeeded masquerade, till the heads of our young friends might be pardoned for growing a little giddy, and their eyes for being a little dazzled by the fair forms that surrounded them in the “ never-ending, still beginning” waltz. What would have been Mrs. Llewelyn’s surprise and horror could she have beheld her son with his arms encircling the waist of a fair princess, whilst her hand rested on his shoulder, and she looked in his face and smiled and talked with perfect composure. Eva, too, had she beheld the sight, would have probably felt more “ virtuously indignant” at such barefaced impudence than

even Mrs. Llewelyn ; but in blissful ignorance they read a long account sent them by Howel of a new dance called the Waltz, which he had learned in Germany : wondering what could make it so delightful, and what it could be like.

Days flew by, and the young heroes of Blenheim appeared to have forgotten that "the field of glory," and not a ball-room, "is the field for men;" when they received an invitation to join a large party of hunters, who were preparing to visit the winter retreat of the wild boar and the elk in the Black Forest in Hungary.

No second invitation was necessary ; the few preparations needful for the expedition were speedily completed, leave of absence was obtained from head-quarters, and Tywysog, who was deemed too valuable and too faithful a friend to have his life endangered by the tasks of an infuriated wild boar, was consigned to the care of Howel's attendants.

The wild enthusiasm inspired by a species of hunting alike new and exciting, was rather increased than abated when the leave of absence of our young friends had nearly expired; and they announced to their comrades, while, after a most successful day's sport, they were seated around a blazing fire, that the hunt of the next day must be their last in the Black Forest.

Little did the joyous party carousing around that blazing fire dream of "the numbers that would rue the hunting of that day" which, was already breaking upon them. Soon after sun-rise the call from the jager horn roused hundreds of noble youths from their slumbers, and long and cheerily did it ring amongst the steep mountains and wild rocky dells which surrounded the wild desolate waste. Early in the morning, in the ardour of the chase, Howel spurred his fiery steed, and soon left Herbert, who rode a less spirited horse, far behind him; nor did Herbert obtain even a

passing glimpse of him during the remainder of the day. Night closed in : a December night in the Black Forest, and dreadfully cold and piercing ; but our bold hunters heeded it not, and the flasks of wine and of brandy were passing quickly from one comrade to another, amongst a large group of hunters who were seated around an enormous fire, when Herbert Gladstone joined them.

"Where is your friend ? where is young Llewelyn ?" asked several eager voices at once.

"I know not," exclaimed Gladstone, in a voice of alarm. "I imagined he made one of your party."

"He must have joined another party, and will fall in with us on our road back to Vienna to-morrow," said young Count Walstein.

"He was with the party who killed the boar that we missed," observed a young man : "I saw him riding by the side of that tall

Hungarian, who spends four months of every year in hunting in this forest."

This assertion calmed Herbert's fears for the safety of his friend; he ate his supper, and retired to rest on the floor of a miserable hut, with his cloak for a coverlid, and slept as soundly as he had ever done on a bed of down.

On the following morning he was told that the tall Hungarian had left the neighbourhood, and that many of his own party of hunters were already on the road to Vienna. Herbert asked for Llewelyn, and was informed that he had started with them.

On reaching Vienna, Herbert instantly rode to his lodgings, and was greatly surprised to find that Howel had not been heard of. Tywysog, on perceiving Herbert, sprang forward with a joyful bound; but when he discovered that he was alone, he rushed past him to the head of the staircase, stood for a short time sniffing the air, and then returned

to the room, rested his head on Herbert's knee, looked up in his face, and whined piteously.

"Tywysog ! poor Tywysog ! where, oh ! where is your master ?" said Herbert, in a melancholy tone. The dog looked towards the door, and then gave a loud howl.

"Tywysog, you will drive me mad !" said Herbert, starting up, and walking up and down the room at a rapid pace.

At length, unable to bear longer this miserable state of suspense, he seized his hat, and, followed by Tywysog, walked to the house of the nobleman who had invited Howel to join the hunt. He found a large party of hunters, gaily talking over the dangers past ; but Howel was not amongst them, nor could any one present give any account of him. Vainly did they strive to keep Herbert with them : he hurried from light and noise, hoping to find relief to his troubled spirit in quiet and darkness ; but when he

reached his own room, he felt as if the light and the noise were more tolerable than his own undisturbed thoughts.

Herbert sent messengers to every house in the city in which Howel had an acquaintance; but they all returned with the same heart-rending intelligence, that of Howel they knew nothing.

The recollection that the Duke of Marlborough was to leave Vienna on the following morning for the court of Berlin, and that he must accompany him, well nigh threw Herbert into a fever: he packed up everything of value belonging to Howel, and, followed by the restless and unhappy Tywysog, left Vienna in a state of mind bordering on distraction.

His feelings were more or less participated in by every officer on the staff; and the mysterious disappearance of Howel, who was not only beloved by the officers of his regiment,

but by the men, cast a temporary gloom over the mess-table and the barrack-room.

For many days Herbert strove to buoy up his spirits with the hope that Howel would join them at Berlin: but, alas! he came not; and Herbert received a letter from a German baron, at whose castle the hunters had halted for the night, on their way to the Black Forest, from which he learned that no tidings could be obtained of Howel amongst the few hunters who were still pursuing their sport in the forest.

As long as even a glimmer of hope remained, Herbert had determined upon postponing the heart-rending task of writing to Mr. Llewelyn and Mrs. Wynn; but now he felt, cost him what it might, that the dreadful tidings must be communicated. He despatched the letters by one of his own servants, who was to be the bearer of them to Wales. The idea once occurred to him of sending Tywysog with him; but the poor dog, since

he had lost his master, had attached himself to Herbert in so remarkable a manner that he could not make up his mind to part with him.

From the hour that Herbert's letter was received at Glyn Llewelyn, it might be said that "the sun of the Llewelyns had set," for the sound of joy and the sound of gladness were never more heard within their hall.

And how did Eva bear the fearful tidings? —For a time she was perfectly stunned by the blow, and seemed unconscious of everything that was going on around her; and when at length she awoke to a full consciousness of her misery, a serious fit of illness followed, and fears for her life were entertained. But Eva was one of the least selfish of human beings; and, though life had become valueless to her, for the sake of her mother she prayed to live. Her prayer was heard; but when she was sufficiently re-

covered to leave her own room, and she tried to occupy herself with her usual employments, the work would frequently fall from her hands, and she would sit with her eyes fixed on the floor for hours at a time: but though her hands were idle, her mind was busily at work.

As her health improved, she obtained such mastery over her feelings that although a cold heavy weight pressed on her heart, yet would she converse calmly with her mother; and at length she declared herself equal to a visit to Glyn Llewelyn, and an interview with poor Mrs. Llewelyn.

When Eva arrived at the Glyn, Mr. Llewelyn came out to receive her: he did not speak, but lifted her from her horse and carried her into the hall. Eva looked around her and shuddered. Mr. Llewelyn, throwing himself into a chair, burst out in a wild paroxysm of grief, that seemed to shake his whole frame. Eva gazed at him with

tearless eyes, but felt as if her heart was breaking.

"We loved him too much: we made an idol of him—he has been taken from us," Mr. Llewelyn at length exclaimed with a convulsive sigh.

"Give sorrow words, the grief that doth not speak,
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it break,"

says one who was deeply read in every passion of the human heart; and though the effort it cost Mr. Llewelyn to speak these few words was great, yet in a short time after he became tolerably composed, and asked Eva if she felt equal to seeing poor Mrs. Llewelyn.

"We must take care of you, my dear child, and not try your feelings too much, or we shall lose you next," and the tears streamed down his cheeks as he spoke.

Eva threw her arms round his neck, and assured him that she was quite well, and felt equal to any exertion—any trial!

"God bless you, God bless you!" was all he

could utter ; but hastily opening the door of the room in which Mrs. Llewelyn was sitting, he held it back for Eva to enter, and then walked quietly away. Mrs. Llewelyn rose up to meet Eva, threw her arms around her, and blessed her again and again : she shed no tears, and there was an unnatural calmness about her that was more heart-rending than the most violent grief. Eva had remained cool and collected during her painful interview with Mr. Llewelyn ; but a sickness and a feeling of dismay came over her as she gazed on the tearless eyes and rigid expression of feature in poor Mrs. Llewelyn's face, and she burst into tears.

"Eva," said Mrs. Llewelyn in a hollow tone, "did you hear that when I was told my boy was dead, I did not shed a tear ? It was true : quite true ; nor have I shed one since."

Mrs. Llewelyn laid her head on Eva's shoulder, took Eva's hand in hers, and then, fixing her eyes on the floor, remained evidently unconscious of all that was passing around her.

Eva tried in vain to arouse her : she answered yes and no to the questions addressed to her, but it was evidently without being aware of what she was saying ; though when Eva's hand was being withdrawn, she grasped it tightly in hers, and asked if Eva too were going to leave her ? Eva's presence became so necessary to Mrs. Llewelyn's comfort, that for several months she and her mother remained at the Hall ; and though Eva felt that the light mirth which springs from a light heart could never more be her portion, yet her deep sorrow was rendered less gloomy by her efforts to cheer Mrs. Llewelyn. She had at length the comfort of seeing her resume her usual occupations. At first they appeared to amuse her, but shortly it struck even Eleanor that she went through them mechanically, and that they neither amused nor interested her. It was true that she visited her dairy and poultry-yard daily ; asked the same questions that she had been for years in the habit of asking ; made entries in her

memorandum-book—but it was observed that she never looked them over after entering them, or alluded to any of her domestic concerns when conversing with her family.

Herbert Gladstone, having obtained a short leave of absence, set off for Glyn Llewelyn. It was evening when he arrived, and from the extreme quiet which reigned through the hall when he entered it, he imagined that it was unoccupied. Old Roderic's seat was empty, and his harp was pushed far back into one of the bow windows: several of its cords were broken, and hanging neglectedly around it. What a tale of woe did that untuned harp speak! Herbert had but short time allowed him for bitter recollections, for Tywysog, who accompanied him, bounded forward towards the high table at which the family, dressed in deep mourning, were seated. The sudden appearance of her son's dog, who in the wildness of his joy had sprung up to lick her face, completely overcame poor Mrs. Llewelyn, and

falling back in her chair, she fainted. When she recovered she asked eagerly for Herbert, grasped his hand in hers, and looked earnestly in his face: but she did not speak; and Herbert declared that to his dying day he should never forget that look. Poor Mr. Llewelyn caressed Tywysog, and endeavoured to conceal from his wife that the faithful dog was carefully examining every corner, and evidently searching for his lost master. Eva watched him till she felt as if her senses were deserting her; and, at length unable to control her feelings, she rushed out of the hall, followed by Tywysog: who, to her horror, made for the door of the room formerly occupied by Howel, before which he lay down and howled.

“ Oh, if you have any pity in your heart, take him away!” exclaimed Eva to Jane Pierce, who, on hearing the noise, came out of Eleanor’s room.

“ Tywysog, Tywysog!” said Jane Pierce, caressing him with as much affection as she

could have done had he been her child; "well may you howl, for you, like poor Jane Pierce, have lost your best friend:" and she burst into tears. Tears also started into Eva's eyes: not one had come to her relief during the dreadful scene in the hall, but the sight of Jane Pierce's astonished and affected her; and she wept till the burning pain across her brow was lessened, and the iron band that seemed to be crushing her heart was removed.

Herbert Gladstone's visit was productive of much good, not only to Wenefrede, but to Mr. Llewelyn; and the latter was observed gradually to resume his usual occupations with considerable interest, though his loud laugh was no longer heard in his dog-kennel or stable.

On the evening which was to be the last that Herbert was to spend at the Glyn, he was sitting between Mrs. Llewelyn and Wenefrede, when the former suddenly seized his hand, and said,—

“ God bless you, Herbert Gladstone, for coming to see us ! You have done Mr. Llewelyn and Wenefrede much good ; and I am sure that you will come and comfort them when I am in my grave.” She spoke so low that no one but Herbert heard what she said. “ I have had too much prosperity : I did not know what real grief was. See the change it has worked in me—it has changed my hair grey, and rendered me as weak as a new-born child. Herbert Gladstone, remember that ‘ man is born to sorrow,’ and be prepared for the hour of trial: for come it will, sooner or later ; but I hope that much happiness will, nevertheless, fall to your lot,—God bless you ! God bless you !”

CHAPTER V.

"I may not forget
My visitations, that have shadowed me
Like an eclipse, until my tortured heart
Was weakened like a child's."—MELLYN.

DAYS—months rolled on, but no tidings of Howel Llewelyn reached the Glyn. Mrs. Llewelyn's cheeks grew paler and thinner; and when she smiled, those who beheld her declared that it told a sadder tale than the most violent burst of grief would have done. She was as passive as a well-trained child,—anxious to please all around her, and to spare them from trouble and anxiety on her account. A long and dreary winter passed away, and

Mrs. Llewelyn, though confined through extreme weakness to her bed, was still alive; but very suddenly, early in the spring, apparently without a pang, she breathed her last sigh. All whom she most fondly loved were standing around her bed; but so peacefully did her spirit depart from "its tenement of clay," that several moments elapsed before they were aware of the event. Thus, in the prime of womanhood, sunk Mrs. Llewelyn to her grave!

"Thrice happy, but of life to lose the worst,—

This grief though deep, though fatal, was her first."

Many were the changes at the Glyn which speedily followed the death of Mrs. Llewelyn. Eleanor assumed the entire management of every department, "and ruled the household with an iron rod." In vain did the old servants complain to Mr. Llewelyn: grief seemed to have deprived him alike of all energy of mind and body, and his often-repeated

promises of speaking to Eleanor were forgotten as soon as the complainants were out of his sight. When one of the many aged servants died, his or her place was no longer occupied by a child or grandchild, but a stranger from Eleanor's estate in Montgomeryshire was sent for to fill the vacant situation. Eva continued to visit at the hall long after old friends and neighbours, who were disgusted with the cold-hearted, overbearing manners of Eleanor, had ceased to pay even a visit of form. Did Mr. Llewelyn complain of the neglect of his old friends, Eleanor would fill him a large glass of ale, and hint that they were afraid of intruding upon him, knowing how deeply he was afflicted.

"They did not neglect me in this way when your mother died, Eleanor: but no matter, if they don't like to come, why let them stay away."

But the loneliness of the hall soon became

irksome to Mr. Llewelyn, and he turned to his once favourite amusement of coursing for relief; but it wearied without amusing him : he swore at the dogs, and then at his men, and returned home out of humour with himself and all around him.

About this time, Eleanor one morning announced that she had received a letter from her cousin, Lady Hartmore ; who with Lord Hartmore, and their daughter, Lady Mary, intended doing themselves the pleasure of spending a few days at the Glyn, on their way to Dublin.

“ I tell you what, Eleanor,” said Mr. Llewelyn, “ I find all your cousins and particular friends so confoundedly stupid and disagreeable, that I shall take myself off to Plas Conway. But bless me ! Eleanor, was not Lady Hartmore one of the Owens ? ”

“ Yes, sir, one of the Owens of —— ”

“ Oh, for mercy’s sake ! spare me her pedigree. Why, then, she is a first cousin to that

scoundrel Trevor Owen; and that is an additional motive for my leaving a clear house for them, if they must come."

Mrs. Wynn rendered Plas Conway so agreeable to Mr. Llewelyn, that he extended his visit from a few days to a few weeks. Eva gave up all her usual occupations to amuse him: walked with him, rode with him, and, in short, anticipated his very wishes, with the unwearied affection of an attached child.

"Oh! that my daughter Eleanor resembled you, dear Eva!" he one day exclaimed; "but yet I ought not to complain, whilst my dear, good little Wenefrede is spared to me."

"I must own, my dear friend," said Mrs. Wynn, after Mr. Llewelyn had one day uttered some bitter invectives against Eleanor; "I wonder that you do not at once put a stop to the domestic tyranny of which you complain."

"Easier said than done, let me tell you, Madam Wynn. Why, Eleanor has such a tremendous spirit, I don't dare interfere with her;

sorrow has made quite an old man of me, and I let things take their chance. So as I have but peace I care for little else; and peace I have to my heart's content, for Eleanor is a capital woman of business, and looks over poor old Griffith's accounts, and saves me a world of trouble in that way."

"It is very sad to see the melancholy change which grief has worked in poor Mr. Llewelyn," said Eva one morning to her mother.

"Certainly, my dear, the change is very perceptible; and he not only looks ill and old, but his mind has evidently given way, or he would not allow Eleanor to rule him, and every one about him, in the way they do."

"Should Mr. Llewelyn be taken from us, I should never enter the hall again," exclaimed Eva.

"I suspect Eleanor would bear any neglect on your part with great philosophy, Eva," said Mrs. Wynn, with a smile.

"Oh! ma'am, I often tell you that I know

Eleanor better than you do, and that disrespect ~~shown~~ shown her, even by a beggar, would vex her proud spirit; but you are so kind, so good yourself, dear mother, that it is impossible for you to understand the wickedness of her heart."

"Eva, could you read the secret thoughts of my heart, you would, I believe, discover that I think worse of hers than even you do."

"Is it possible?"

"Yes, my love; for, if I do not greatly wrong her, she rejoiced instead of weeping at the loss of one who ought to have been very dear to her."

Eva spoke not, but turned dreadfully pale, and an instant after quitted the room.

One morning at a very early hour Mr. Llewelyn arrived at Plas Conway; his countenance bore almost a cheerful smile, and Eva exclaimed as she advanced to meet him,—

"My dear sir, I am quite certain that you are the bearer of good news!"

"Yes, Eva, I have good news for those who love finery and wedding cake," said Mr. Llewelyn, with a laugh that bore some resemblance to his laugh of other days. "I have got a letter here from Herbert Gladstone which will tell you all about it. Now the deuce take it, if I have not left it behind after all. Wenefrede must have carried it off: but never mind, it was a precious foolish concern, not worth the trouble of reading. I have been as much in love in my day as any man I ever saw, but I'll be hanged if I should not have found it just as easy a matter to have pushed Penman Maer into the sea, as to have written such a letter as Master Herbert's. Bless me! from his own account, his heart must be as big as those of three common men, or it could not contain all the love he says he has for Wenefrede."

Mr. Llewelyn laughed heartily; but suddenly stopped, and said, in a low tone, "My poor wife!"

Eva asked when the wedding was to take place.

"Oh! that reminds me that I had strict orders from Wenefrede not to return without you: she has a hundred things to consult you about; but as for the wedding-day, we won't fix that till the bridegroom has arrived in England."

In less than a fortnight Herbert Gladstone made his appearance at the Glyn; but he was not allowed to fix his wedding-day. Lord Gladstone, who was in a declining state of health, and unable to take a journey into Wales, had sent to request that the marriage ceremony might be performed in London. Poor Herbert had considered this a most excellent scheme, and was totally unprepared for the decided negative put upon it, not only by Eleanor, but also by Mr. Llewelyn. They said that from generation to generation all the females of the family had been married in their own parish church, and that Wenefrede would bring disgrace on her

line should she deviate from the good old custom. Herbert and Wenefrede abused "good old customs" in good set terms, but it was of no avail. In a few days after his arrival Herbert found himself obliged to say once more farewell, in consequence of having received by a messenger, sent express by Lady Gladstone, a very alarming account of his father's health.

About this period died Mr. Llewelyn's old and faithful steward, Evan Griffith; his death would have occasioned much sorrow at any time, but now that indolence daily gained ground with Mr. Llewelyn, it seemed to him an overwhelming misfortune. On the evening of the day on which the funeral of Evan Griffith took place, Mr. Llewelyn retired at an unusually early hour to his smoking room, and ordered an extra sized jug of strong ale for his private drinking. Very little of it remained, and he was beginning to feel very comfortable, when the door opened, and Elea-

nor, laden with account books, entered the room.

"Bless my heart, Eleanor!" exclaimed her father, in a half sleepy, half peevish tone, "can't you leave me in peace for this evening? There, do pray take away all those horrid papers."

"Indeed, sir, you little know how necessary it is for somebody to look over them without loss of time. I am sorry to disturb you, but everything has been going to rack and ruin during Evan Griffith's long illness; and if you will not look over his accounts (which I must own will be a very long and tedious task) yourself, unless you wish to see poverty staring you in the face, you must seek out for a very clever accountant to do it for you."

"I never was a clever accountant," said Mr. Llewelyn, "so it is no use my looking over that heap of dirty books. But where on earth am I to find some one to take the

trouble off my hands?" He sighed heavily, and seizing the jug of ale, he drank off every remaining drop. "But, Eleanor," he continued, "when any of the old servants die, you have always somebody to pop in their places; so surely you know of some clever fellow that would suit me as a steward?"

"I thought that you would perhaps like to try your old sporting friend, John Parry; he—

"He is a precious deal too lazy to take the situation," said Mr. Llewelyn; "I know him well."

Eleanor named at least a dozen different men, all of whom she was well aware her father would object to, and at length he exclaimed,—

"Come, Eleanor, this is very dry work, and I must have another jug of ale."

Eleanor perceived that her father had already taken more ale than was good for him, but she had set her heart on getting him to

name Trevor Owen for his new steward, and anxious to keep him in good humour, went herself to order the ale.

"I have been trying to call to mind, sir," said Eleanor, filling her father's horn with the fresh ale, "if we have no poor cousin on either side the house, who would be glad of the stewardship; but no one occurs to me. It is strange, too; for my poor mother was a celebrated accountant."

"Yes, but she had a rascally nephew who beat her hollow; why, he could multiply by three figures, in his head, a confoundedly deal quicker than I could on paper. Capital agent he would have made, had he been sober and respectable."

"Sir," said Eleanor, "somebody must set your accounts to rights, as I told you before; and that shortly, or," she added, in a very serious tone, "you will be ruined!"

"Ruined!" exclaimed Mr. Llewelyn, who was more than half stupified by the ale he

had drunk. "Ruined! and who can save me from it?"

"Trevor Owen, sir."

"Hang the fellow!—but I suppose you must send for him; and now, Eleanor," said Mr. Llewelyn, composing himself to sleep, "remember, not another word about business for the next six months."

The next morning Mr. Llewelyn asked Eleanor, in a voice of alarm, if he had been dreaming, or if he had really given her leave to send for Trevor Owen.

"It is no dream, sir; you desired me to write and invite him here, to arrange Evan Griffith's papers."

"Hang the papers! why, if it is not enough to drive a man mad, to hear of nothing but those papers from morning to night. But remember, Madam Eleanor, into my presence your cousin does not come. Bless me! bless me! what will Mrs. Wynn and Eva say when they hear of this?"

CHAPTER VI.

"Nay, Eleanor, then must I chide outright,
Presumptuous dame, ill-natured Eleanor."

SECOND PART, HENRY VI.

TREVOR OWEN had spent upwards of a fortnight under Mr. Llewelyn's roof before he was made acquainted with his having arrived; and, much to Wenefrede's surprise and pleasure, Eleanor one morning asked her if she would not like to spend a few days at Plas Conway.

"Oh, yes! I shall be delighted to do so," was the answer.

And in less than an hour's time she was on her road thither; little dreaming that

Eleanor hoped, during her absence, to reconcile her father and Trevor Owen.

Mr. Llewelyn had just awoke from his evening's nap, and refreshed himself with a draught of ale, when Eleanor entered the room. He instantly started up, and, in a lazy tone, said, "He hoped she had no horrid business to trouble him with."

"On the contrary, sir, I have the pleasure of informing you that all your affairs have been so admirably arranged that, if you will but name an agent who will bestow common attention upon them, they are never likely to give you a moment's uneasiness again."

"Hurrah! Eleanor; this is glorious news. Here's your health and many thanks to you."

"If thanks are due to any one, sir, they are due to my cousin."

"Well, indeed, then, I am much obliged to him, and you may tell him so."

"He would feel much gratified by hearing

it from your own lips, sir. He is about to leave the house : may I ask him into this room only to wish you farewell ?”

“ No relation of yours, Eleanor, must quit my house at this time of night.”

“ I do not often ask a favour of you, sir,” said Eleanor.

“ Very true,” said Mr. Llewelyn, interrupting her ; “ and, therefore, I promise to grant the one you are about to request before it is made.”

“ Then, sir, shake hands with Trevor Owen.”

“ Well, if I am not fairly caught,” cried Mr. Llewelyn, starting from his chair, and looking angrily around him ; “ but I have said it, and it must be done, though I would just as soon shake hands with a bear.”

Trevor Owen was introduced, and though Mr. Llewelyn received him very coolly at first, after a jug of ale had been drunk between them, his natural kind-hearted

manner was resumed. Trevor Owen could be "all things to all men," and as his daily bread depended upon his exertions on the present occasion, it was not very wonderful that he taxed his talents to the utmost to render himself agreeable; and by the time supper was announced, Mr. Llewelyn had charitably forgotten his former delinquencies, and flattered himself that he had not only met with a good steward, but a good companion to enliven his declining days.

Trevor Owen led Eleanor to the top of the high table, and then, at the request of Mr. Llewelyn, seated himself by her side. The blessing asked, old Roderic suddenly arose from his seat and left the hall.

"What ails Roderic? I hope he is not ill!" said Mr. Llewelyn, in a tone of anxiety.

Jane Pierce instantly followed Roderic.

"Well, Jane Pierce, and what's the matter

with Roderic?" asked Mr. Llewelyn, ~~when~~ when she at length returned.

"If you please, sir, Roderic says he——"

"Is ill," exclaimed Eleanor, interrupting ~~her~~ her.

"Did you say he was ill?" inquired Mr. Llewelyn.

"No, sir, I said nothing of the kind."

"But he is ill," said Eleanor, looking ~~anxiously~~ anxiously in her face.

"No, madam; and I will not tell lies, even ~~to please you.~~"

"Jane Pierce, you forget yourself strangely. Leave my presence instantly," exclaimed Eleanor, turning white with rage.

Jane Pierce was leaving the hall, when Mr. Llewelyn, who had grown a little deaf, and had not heard what had just passed, called to her, and begged her to take a pint of hot spiced ale to old Roderic.

"Ale will not do him any good, sir," said Jane Pierce.

"Bless my heart, poor old man! then he must be ill, indeed. Send some one for one of the old nurses at Bangor, for he is quite beyond my skill. Poor old man! poor old man!"

When Eleanor entered her bed-room, she found Jane Pierce standing motionless by the toilet-table. The maid received a long and haughty lecture from her mistress, for her conduct in the hall, without moving a muscle of her face; which indifference roused Eleanor to such a pitch, that at length she seized Jane Pierce by the arm, and angrily asked, "Were you attending to what I was saying?"

"Yes, madam, I hear every word; but I no longer consider myself as a servant of yours: I have only remained up till this late hour to wish you good-by; for before you leave your bed to-morrow I shall be on my way to my sister, with whom I intend to reside for the future."

"Jane Pierce, are you mad?" said Eleanor, in a low tone.

"No, madam; and most sincerely do I hope that the servant who succeeds me may serve you as faithfully as I have done for nearly thirty years. Madam, I wish you health and happiness," said Jane Pierce, moving towards the door.

"Stop, Jane!" exclaimed Eleanor; "I owe you a large sum of money: you have never received any wages from me."

"You owe me nothing, madam; your mother made me independent. I can receive nothing from your hands; and now, madam, I once more wish you good-by."

Eleanor laid hold of the hand of Jane Pierce, and said, "Surely, Jane, you will not allow an unkind word to part us for ever?"

"Madam, your unkindness to me is not the cause of my leaving you: I go because I do not choose to remain under the same roof with Trevor Owen."

“And is she really gone?” exclaimed Eleanor, as the door closed upon Jane Pierce. “Oh! she cannot—she will not leave me!” There was agony in the very idea of such a thing; for Jane Pierce was well acquainted with more than one transaction of Eleanor’s that she would little like to be blazoned abroad; and moreover she thought how ill she could afford to lose a friend—an only friend: for such, in the bitterness of her heart, she confessed Jane Pierce to be. Eleanor at length attempted to undress herself, but many laces were cut, and bobbins broken, before she could succeed, and weary and unhappy she lay down in her bed: so ended a day she had intended should be one of joy. For years she had been striving to bring about a reconciliation between her father and cousin; she had at last succeeded; and what had she gained?—the society of a worthless relation. Eleanor was roused on the following morning by a timid rap at the door.

"Come in!" exclaimed Eleanor, hoping to see Jane Pierce enter; but the door was slowly opened by a young girl who had been in the habit of assisting Jane Pierce. She looked frightened, but walked up to Eleanor's bed and presented her with a bunch of keys which she said Jane Pierce had desired her to deliver into her hands. Eleanor took the keys without uttering a word.

"Can I help you to dress, madam?" said the poor girl, in a timid voice.

"You help me to dress! No, I should think not!" exclaimed Eleanor, in a scornful tone. "Send up Molly Davies. Oh!" exclaimed Eleanor, "I did not think that Jane Pierce would really leave me. And that old dotard, Roderic,—what am I to do with him?"

Eleanor soon found that the troubles occasioned by a refractory household were not the only ones with which she had to contend; for she received a letter from Herbert Gladstone which made the blood boil in her

veins, but which she dared not resent. He wrote to expostulate with her on the impropriety of admitting Trevor Owen under the same roof with Wenefrede. In consequence of this letter, Wenefrede was allowed to remain at Plas Conway, to the infinite satisfaction of its inmates.

Poor Mr. Llewelyn grew daily more indolent, and more addicted to the pleasures of the table; and frequently would he remain seated at the high table sipping ale from morning till night, his only apparent amusement being that of watching the smoke curl up the ample chimney. The effects occasioned by this mode of life soon became apparent, and Wenefrede was suddenly summoned from Plas Conway to attend the sick-bed of her father, who had been seized with an apoplectic attack. Eva, forgetting in her anxiety for Mr. Llewelyn her dread of encountering Trevor Owen, returned with Wenefrede to the hall. Mr. Llewelyn gradually recovered the use of his speech but

on the morning on which Eva had fixed for leaving, when she kissed his pale cold forehead, and wished him good-bye, she felt that she was taking leave of him for ever in this world. With a very heavy heart she was walking down stairs, when she encountered Eleanor, who in a constrained tone thanked her for the interest that she took in her father, but hoped she would not be affronted at being told that, as the most perfect quiet was necessary for him, she would thank her not to visit him again till she should receive a summons from her.

"Never darken these doors again, is what you would say if you dared!" exclaimed Eva, all her Welsh blood mounting up into her cheeks; "but do not distress yourself, I have taken leave of one that I loved as fondly as ever daughter did a father, and of this dear, dear old hall for ever."

In the hall Eva encountered Wenefrede, who had overheard this conversation, and who

threw her arms around Eva and begged she would not leave her.

"But, my dear Wenefrede, you would not wish me to remain after Eleanor has actually ordered me out of the house?"

"Eleanor has no right to order my dear father's friend out of his own house, and I know full well that when he finds that you are gone it will make him ill again."

"Hush, hush, my dear Wenefrede! walls have ears : remember, a quarrel with Eleanor would not add to your comfort ; and believe me, my remaining here can do you no good. I cannot protect you from Trevor Owen ; but," she added in a whisper, "Herbert Gladstone can, and I shall write to him to-night, and beg him to come down to the Glyn immediately."

The hope of soon seeing Herbert comforted Wenefrede, and she at length allowed Eva to leave her. Lounging near the entrance gate stood Trevor Owen, who on perceiving Eva

advanced quickly towards her and offered to assist her in mounting her horse; but she turned from him, and laying her hand lightly on the shoulder of old Roderic, who had attended her to the gate, she sprang into her seat, and rode quickly down the vale.

"Ride on," said Trevor Owen, "ride on, proud dame; but your day of triumph is past: these halls will never own you for their mistress."

"Nor you for their master, Trevor Owen," said old Roderic, in a bitter tone.

"Stranger things than that have come to pass, my old friend," answered Trevor Owen.

"You would have been nearer the truth had you called me your old enemy; for sooner than I would see you master of the hall, Trevor Owen, I would set fire to it with my own hands, and gladly perish in the flames."

Trevor Owen uttered a fearful curse, and turned away from the irritated old harper.

Great was Eleanor's astonishment, not un-

mixed with dismay, when late one evening the hall door was thrown open, and Herbert Gladstone walked in. Eleanor was seated at the high table, with Trevor Owen by her side; who instantly retreated through a side door. Eleanor advanced to meet her unexpected guest, but was received with a coldness which chafed her proud spirit more than she would own even to herself. Eleanor asked after the health of Lord Gladstone. Herbert did not answer her, but exclaimed,—“ Miss Llewelyn, I am astonished—I am shocked at your harbouring in this house a man who attempted to carry off by force your sister. If you are not already aware of the fact, I think it right to inform you that the friends of your family are disgusted with your conduct, and that the world cries shame!”

Rage kept Eleanor silent for an instant: her lips quivered and turned of an ashy hue, and her whole figure shook; but at length she exclaimed,—

"May I ask you, sir, by what authority you interfere in my domestic arrangements?"

At this instant Wenefrede ran into the hall, having been informed by Roderic of the arrival of Herbert; and Eleanor gladly left the lovers to a *tête à tête*.

Herbert urged Mr. Llewelyn to consent to his marriage with Wenefrede taking place during his stay (which his father's health forbade to be a long one) but in vain; and Herbert left the hall, sorrowing for poor Wenefrede and for himself. Trevor Owen he had never seen during his visit; for though the latter had long since ceased to pay any attention to the commands or wishes of Eleanor, yet a hint from her on the present occasion that his absence would be agreeable, was speedily taken: for he liked not the looks of Herbert Gladstone, nor of his sword. Mrs. Wynn was absent at this time on a visit to her daughter in Merionethshire; but though Eva had been forbidden to visit at the Glyn, scarcely a day

passed without her riding to a cottage in its neighbourhood to inquire for poor Mr. Llewelyn : who lingered on day after day, but at length exhausted nature gave way, and he sank into a heavy sleep, which proved to him the sleep of death.

Eva had during many weeks past expected daily to hear of his death ; but when it was announced to her at last by old Evan, with all the abruptness with which the lower class delight to herald bad tidings, a sudden chill came over her heart, and she wept as if for the loss of a kind parent. Eva received during the morning a few sad lines from Wenefrede, who begged and entreated her to hasten to the Glyn ; but as she confessed in a postscript that Eleanor knew nothing of this invitation, Eva, much as she longed to accept it, felt that she could not do so without running the risk of being insulted by Eleanor.

“ Oh, that I could but go to dear Wenefrede ! ” exclaimed Eva, whilst big round tears

rolled down her cheeks. Surely Eleanor, cold-hearted and unfeeling as she is, will not refuse me this melancholy gratification !”

But day after day passed on, and no letter from Eleanor arrived, when one morning old Evan bustled into the parlour in a great state of excitement; or perhaps we should better describe him by saying that he was in a towering rage.

“ Evan, what is the matter ?” asked Eva.

“ Matter—matter enough, Miss Eva !” at length he sputtered out in Welsh ; “ why, would you believe it now, Squire Llewelyn is to be buried to morrow, and they have not had the civility to ask me to the funeral—I whom the squire, God bless him, always said he looked upon as an old friend ! Oh ! it is that Eleanor’s doing ; well, when she is called to her last account, no one will grieve after her !”

CHAPTER VII.

ÆGEON.—Why look you strange on me? you know me well.

ANTIPHOLIS.—I never saw you in my life till now.

ÆGEON.—Oh! grief hath changed me since you saw me last,

And careful hours, with time's deformed hand,
Have written strange defeatures in my face;—
But tell me yet, dost thou not know my voice?

SHAKSPEARE'S COMEDY OF ERRORS.

THE night of lamentation (as the night before a funeral is still styled in Cærnarvonshire) for the late Mr. Llewelyn arrived; and friends and relations of the deceased assembled in numbers in the hall, to mourn for the departed, and to join in the prayers read by the

clergyman of the parish by the side of the coffin. In the centre of the hall stood a table covered with a black cloth which swept the ground; a lighted wax-taper, of an enormous size, stood at either end of it. A door at the upper end of the hall was thrown open, and a melancholy procession of aged servants was seen bearing slowly and solemnly a coffin, which contained the body of their loved and respected master, and which was placed on the table by hands rendered tremulous by grief as well as by age. The bearers then sank on their knees, and burst forth simultaneously in lamentations "not loud but deep." When these had at length subsided, old Roderic repeated the Lord's Prayer; then all arose from their knees, and seated themselves on a bench placed against the wall. The door at the upper end of the hall again opened, and Eleanor, Wenefrede, and several of their female relations, attired in the deepest mourning, entered, attended by a grey-headed, vene-

nable-looking clergyman. The whole party walked up to the coffin, and fell on their knees before it, whilst the clergyman delivered a solemn and affecting prayer. Every relation or friend, after he had entered the hall, walked up to the coffin and, kneeling down, uttered a prayer or an ejaculation of sorrow, and then, without speaking to any one present, walked on to a vacant seat: and thus the melancholy silence which reigned throughout the hall, though its door was constantly opening to admit fresh guests, remained unbroken. A solitary lamp was burning on the high table, and emitted just sufficient light to show how deep was the darkness that reigned around: except in the centre, which was partially lighted up by wax-tapers which had been placed around the coffin.

The death-like stillness that prevailed, and the deep mourning dresses of the females, combined to produce on the minds of all present feelings of awe and melancholy. At

length the clergyman arose, approached the coffin, and commenced reading the burial service; and never was that most beautiful and affecting office more solemnly or touchingly read. A hymn followed, in which all present, with the exception of Eleanor and Wenefrede, joined: the last stanza was not finished when the hall-door was suddenly opened. Those who observed the circumstance imagined that some friend from a distance had arrived; but when a tall, commanding, handsome person, who looked "every inch a gentleman," though clothed in rags, advanced towards the coffin, astonishment filled every breast. Eleanor arose from her seat, and walking towards the unbidden guest, demanded, in an imperious voice, "By what right he entered her hall?"

"By a master's right, Eleanor," said the stranger. "Oh! don't you know me?—can it be that you have forgotten me?—I am Howel—your long lost brother."

"You, Howel Llewelyn!—No, you are a vile impostor. Howel Llewelyn died in the Black Forest years ago."

But, though Eleanor spoke boldly, it was observed by numbers that her lips quivered, and that her head moved tremulously from side to side.

"Eleanor, dear, dear Eleanor!" exclaimed Wenefrede, springing suddenly forward, "oh, it is—it is indeed"——

But before she could finish her speech, Eleanor seized her so violently by the arm that she could not refrain from uttering a shriek.

"Wenefrede, dearest Wenefrede, I am indeed your brother!" exclaimed the stranger. "Years of sorrow may have changed my features, — but my voice — no, *you* cannot have forgotten the tones of that!" and, throwing his arms around her, he kissed her fondly.

Eleanor, foaming at the mouth with rage, seized hold of him, and exclaimed,—

"Villain — madman — forbear ! Do you imagine that Eleanor Llewelyn will stand quietly by and see her sister insulted by a ragged impostor ?"

"Eleanor," said the stranger, "we are standing by the side of our father's coffin,—and here, even *you* dare not utter a lie,—here, you dare not brand me with the name of an impostor."

Old Roderic, who had become very dear, and whose eyesight was growing dim, did not at first comprehend what was going on ; but when he became aware of the name assumed by the stranger, he walked up him and said : "I am too blind to see your features distinctly, and too deaf to hear the sound of your voice, but if you are indeed our dear, long lost young master, you will know me."

"Yes, my dear old friend, I know you well,—you are Roderic."

His name was pronounced so slowly and distinctly that, deaf as Roderic was, he caught the sound.

"Yes," he exclaimed, in a tone of almost childish delight; "I am Roderic. God bless you! God bless you!" and seizing the hand of the stranger, he kissed it repeatedly, whilst tears of delight rolled down his cheeks.

Several of the old servants now advanced; but though one declared that the stranger bore some resemblance to their young master, and another that there was something in the sound of his voice that reminded them of him, yet they all agreed that he was too dark complexioned and old looking, and moreover, too shabbily dressed to be really Howel.

"Be off, sir!" exclaimed Eleanor; "you are proved to be an impostor. Be off, insolent wretch, or you shall be whipped out of *my* hall."

But the stranger did not move; but looking towards the servants, he asked,—

"Where is Tywysog? where is my dog? Bring him here, and if he does not acknowledge me to be his master, I will confess that I am not Howel Llewelyn."

"Crafty villain!" exclaimed Eleanor; "you well know Tywysog is not here."

"And is he dead, too?" asked the stranger, in a mournful tone.

"No, no," exclaimed Wenefrede; "he is alive and well, and at Plas Conway: he was sent——"

"Wenefrede," said Eleanor, fiercely, "I forbid you to speak to this impudent impostor;" and then turning to a group of frightened-looking servants, she ordered them to seize the stranger, and turn him out of the hall.

"Touch me not," he exclaimed, as they slowly approached him, "or you will rue it to your dying day."

He then turned towards the coffin, raised the lid, and gazed sadly and fondly on the face of the corpse: at length, he stooped down and kissed the cold forehead; and then, with a deep-drawn sigh, replaced the lid.

"If you will not leave my hall without being turned out, and these cowardly fools

dare not do it, I will try the strength of my own arm," said Eleanor, advancing towards him.

"Eleanor," said the stranger, totally unmoved by her threats; "it is vain for you to attempt to disown me for your brother. You knew me before I spoke; and I, too, know you now. Hatred, instead of sisterly love, was painted on your countenance, when you recognised me. You not only believed, but rejoiced in the idea, that I was dead."

At a sign from Eleanor, several stout young men now came forward, but the stranger, turning quickly from them, said,—

"No disgraceful broils shall be caused by my presence in my own hall, by the side of the coffin of my father; I will therefore leave it for to-night." So saying, he slowly walked away.

No sooner had the ponderous door closed after him, than Eleanor ordered an enormous wooden bar, which had not been used since the time of the civil wars, to be drawn across

it ; and sadly and strangely did the sound of the bar, as it passed through the rusty staples, fall upon the ears of the peaceful inhabitants of the Glyn.

Eleanor having left the hall to give some further orders respecting bars and bolts, Wenefrede whispered in the ear of the old clergyman,—

“ Indeed ! indeed ! Mr. Evans, I am convinced it is Howel who has just left the hall.”

“ My dear young lady, I wish I could think as you do : there was certainly something in the voice of the stranger that reminded me of my dear Howel ; but the hair, the complexion, the expression of the face, were not his.”

“ But if it was not dear—dearest Howel, tell me, sir, who could it be ?”

“ I know not ; but I shall set some inquiries on foot to-morrow morning, to try and ascertain that circumstance. But, Miss Wenefrede, where is Trevor Owen ? he has been absent all the evening.”

"He dared not intrude his company here to-night: not one of the old servants would have remained in the hall with him, not even had Eleanor commanded them to do so."

Eleanor returned, and desired Wenefrede to follow her to her bed-room. Eleanor's face was as colourless as that of the corpse, but she exhibited no other outward sign of the fearful conflict which was warring in her breast.

"Wenefrede," she said, in a low, but not unkind voice; "I perceive that you, as well as old Roderic, have been taken in by the unfeeling impostor who intruded into my hall this evening. Who, or what he was, is a perfect mystery to me; but that he could not be our lamented and long lost brother, I can prove."

Eleanor unlocked the door of an Indian cabinet, and produced a packet of letters.

"It is too late for you to read all these letters now, Wenefrede; but that," said Eleanor, taking one from the packet, "will convince you

that Howel was dead before Herbert Gladstone left Germany. I never showed that letter to my father, fearing the effect it might have on his mind ; for, as you well know, he clung, to the very last, to the hope of seeing Howel before he died."

Poor Wenefrede sobbed over the letter as if her heart would break. It was from an acquaintance of Howel at Vienna, who declared that, "the body of a man which answered in every respect to that of Howel Llewelyn, had been found in the forest, but in a very mangled state, near the spot where he had last been seen, by his own party. A horse, of the colour of the one he had ridden on that fatal morning, lay at a short distance from him, likewise much injured ; whilst an enormous pine branch, which lay stretched over them, appeared as if, by falling upon man and horse, it had occasioned their death."

No sooner had Wenefrede quitted Eleanor, than the latter walked down to the common

sitting-room, where she found Trevor Owen walking backwards and forwards with rapid steps.

"You have heard, I suppose," said Eleanor, in a calm, quiet voice, "of the bold impostor who made his way into my hall this evening?"

"I have not only heard of him, but seen him," said Trevor Owen, drily.

"How?—when?" asked Eleanor, eagerly.

"I heard your voice, gentle cousin, raised to a shrill scream; so I opened a side-door to ascertain the cause of so unusual a sound."

"Then, pray, sir, allow me to ask why you did not come forward and turn out the impudent cheat?" said Eleanor, in a voice of bitter indignation.

"Simply, sweet lady, because age has somewhat unnerved an arm never quite equal to cope with that of Howel Llewelyn."

"Howel Llewelyn," muttered Eleanor,

through her clenched teeth, "you well know Owen has been long dead."

"Then it was his ghost," exclaimed Trevor Owen, with a loud laugh, which sounded like a knell to the ears of Eleanor. "But," he continued, evidently enjoying the agony his remark had occasioned her, "I suspect worthy Mr. Evans will find it a horridly obstinate ghost, and one that it will be no easy matter to lay in the Red Sea; so what think you, gentle cousin, of our trying the river Conway?"

"How dare you, Trevor Owen, insult me by talking in such a strain?" asked Eleanor, indignantly. "The grave cannot give up its dead; and Howel has been in his for many years."

"So you and I hoped; but he did not find it an agreeable abode, I suspect, and made his escape from it. We have now nothing left but to try and persuade him to return forthwith; and if fair means won't do, why

we must try foul, or else you and I may soon be called upon to abdicate, in favour of 'the ghost' from the Black Forest."

As Trevor Owen uttered these words, Eleanor raised her eyes to his face; but she instantly withdrew them, shocked by the demon-like expression which it exhibited.

Trevor Owen paused, and then said,—

"Miss Llewelyn, of Plas Hên, Montgomeryshire. How does it sound, Eleanor? Not quite so well, to my fancy, as Miss Llewelyn, of Glyn Llewelyn: but that is all a matter of taste; and when we are bundled out of this house by 'the ghost,' why you will still have enough left to save you and me from starving. We shall not have to beg our bread, that is one comfort."

"Peace! peace! Trevor Owen; or you will drive me mad. You, you ungrateful man, would have been starving years ago but for me; and now, in this hour of trial, you mock, you torture me. But know, sir,

that I fear not 'what man can do unto me;' for, years ago, it was predicted that in this house should I live and die; and mine, and mine only, should it be."

"Eleanor," exclaimed Trevor Owen, "you must be mad already, or you would not venture to quote to me a prediction of that old hag, Catryn Hên."

"I will prove its truth," said Eleanor, in a low hollow voice, "for sooner than relinquish possession of the hall I will die; and then, Trevor Owen, you may starve or beg your bread for ought I shall care."

"Thank you, dearly-beloved cousin, for your kind consideration of me," replied Trevor Owen, coolly; "but as it is past midnight, perhaps, instead of wasting our time in tormenting each other, it would be as well to employ it in devising some scheme to circumvent those of Howel Llewelyn."

"He will not intrude upon us to-morrow: he will not dare to quarrel with me on the

day his father's remains are carried to their last home on earth. No: for to-morrow I feel we are safe; but, to make all secure, I have given orders that no bar nor bolt shall be withdrawn till we are all assembled to-morrow morning."

"Vastly well have you managed everything for to-morrow, sweet gentle Eleanor," said Trevor Owen; "but it will not be quite so agreeable on the day after to have to pack up, bag and baggage, to march away from this fine old place, and to sink, comparatively speaking, into insignificance and poverty."

"Trevor Owen!" said Eleanor, in a voice which made even his callous heart leap in his breast, "insignificance and poverty shall never be coupled with the name of Eleanor Llewelyn: sooner would she die."

"Eleanor," said Trevor Owen, drawing close to her side, and lowering his voice to a whisper, "do you not think it would be much

better that you should live, and that Howel Llewelyn should die?"

"Wretch!" exclaimed Eleanor, starting from him, and rushing towards the door, "for what do you take me? for a fiend?" She threw open the door, and then, in a stern voice, bade him "leave the room,—leave the house, instantly. Villain! villain!" she exclaimed, gasping for breath, "why do you not obey me?"

"Eleanor," said Trevor Owen without advancing a step, "call me every vile name that ever was thought of, if by so doing you will add one moment's happiness to your life, for your words excite neither fear nor anger in my heart; but mark me, madam, if you call any one to your assistance, I will unmask you before all the servants assembled in your hall. I will hold you up to their scorn and abhorrence—aye, and to their pity also. No, Eleanor, I have you in my power: you *dare* not send me from you—where you go I will go. But," he added

with a sneer, "I expect by to-morrow morning that you will have recovered the use of your senses, which appear to have deserted you to-night; and that you will think it a much more agreeable plan to remain mistress of this magnificent house, than to sink into insignificance in a humble home."

"I will never sink into insignificance," exclaimed Eleanor fiercely: "I repeat that I will die a hundred deaths first."

"And I," retorted Trevor Owen, "repeat that it would be much more agreeable to know that Howel Llewelyn was at rest, than to be obliged to leave this fine old hall for a mere cottage."

"Fiend! fiend!" exclaimed Eleanor in a voice of horror, "I dare not trust myself in your company;" and she rushed wildly from the room.

CHAPTER VIII.

"The lonely mountain o'er,
And the resounding shore,
A voice of weeping heard and loud lament."

MILTON.

At an early hour on the following morning all the household, and many of the relations and friends of the late Mr. Llewelyn, were assembled in the Hall, where a substantial breakfast was spread. Trevor Owen ordered the massive bar to be withdrawn from the entrance door, but stationed two athletic servants to keep strict watch by it; and ordered them to seize "the vile impostor" should he try to obtain admission. For some time the breakfast was eaten in solemn silence; but after the jugs of

spiced ale had circulated freely round the table, men grew more talkative: they began to discuss in whispers the startling events of the preceding evening, and many remarks, far from agreeable to Trevor Owen, at length reached his ears.

"The more I think of the appearance of that stranger," said an elderly gentleman aloud, "the more convinced do I become that he is our long-lost friend, Howel Llewelyn: we know not where he has been, and climate and care may have worked strange changes in his appearance. But I will seek him out to-morrow, and hear his history from his own lips.

"And should he but prove to be our dear young master," exclaimed several of the old servants at the same instant, "there will be joy once more in this old Hall."

"Curse the old fools," muttered Trevor Owen, "I must put a stop to this conversation, or they will work themselves up to such a

pitch, that should the devil drop in and claim the lands of the Llewelyns, they would swear by all that is holy that he was their dear young master, arrived to comfort them for the loss of their old one."

Trevor went in search of Eleanor, and found her seated with Wenefrede and a few female friends in the state apartment; he requested to speak a few words to her in private, and slowly and sadly she followed him out of the room. When she returned, her manner was calm and composed as on ordinary occasions, but her face wore the hue of death. She requested all present to accompany her to the Hall; and, with a steady and stately step, led the way. The coffin had been removed from the table, and placed on a bier without the entrance-door. Eleanor, followed by a group of female relations and servants, all dressed in deep mourning, approached the bier.

Vainly did Wenefrede chide the old servants for indulging in loud and repeated bursts of

grief; but, on reaching the bier, she was too much overcome by her own silent sorrow to be able to utter a word. Eleanor, after repeating a short prayer, turned to a servant who was standing near her with a basket on his arm filled with small white loaves. She took several of them in her hand, and offered them, across the coffin, to poor women assembled on purpose to receive them. This custom, once universal at funerals in North Wales, as well as the one that is described in the following page, of offering spiced wine or ale, is evidently of Jewish origin; for Tobit, in his instructions to his son, says—"Pour out thy bread on the burial of the just;" and Jeremiah, when speaking of the utter desolation that should fall upon the Jews, declares—"Neither shall men give them the cup of consolation to drink for their father, or for their mother:" Hosea also speaks of "the bread of mourners."

All the white bread having been distributed, a servant, holding a silver salver on which stood

a large tankard of the same metal, came forward and presented the tankard, which was filled with hot ale richly spiced, to Eleanor. She tasted a few drops, and was on the point of handing it, as she had previously done the bread, to the first person who should come forward to receive it; when the tankard fell suddenly from her hand, and she uttered a low scream, on perceiving that it was the hand of the stranger, who styled himself Howel Llewelyn, that was stretched forth to take it from hers. The stranger, on witnessing the confusion he had occasioned, drew back, with a look of sorrow and contrition that interested in his favour those who beheld it. All present now fell on their knees, and the clergyman repeated the Lord's Prayer. Six of the nearest relations of the deceased then lifted up the bier, and proceeded towards the church, followed by a long train of distant relatives, friends, and old servants, who chanted a funeral hymn, which was repeated by the echoes from

the mountains in mournful cadence. It was a sorrowful sight, to see grey-headed men weeping like infants; and sad to know that they wept, not alone for the loss of the best of masters, but from an apprehension of the evils to come, now that Eleanor Llewelyn filled her father's seat. The procession having entered the church-yard, the bearers stopped, and laid down the bier; all present knelt around it, and the clergyman once more repeated the Lord's Prayer.

The morning had hitherto been fine, though many heavy clouds had hung on the mountain-tops; but as the bier was in the act of being carried into the church, large drops of rain fell heavily on the coffin: to the infinite delight of all the old servants, whose minds were so strongly imbued with the superstitious notion that, "blessed is the corpse that the rain rains on," that had the sun burst forth in all its splendour at this instant, they would have hid their faces in their hands and wept

with even greater bitterness than they had yet done.

The service was concluded, and many of the mournful party had quitted the church before it was observed that the stranger was present. He was leaning against a pillar, with his eyes fixed on the unclosed vault of the Llewelyns, apparently as stiff and motionless as the marble figures which adorned their monuments. The clerk, a young man who had lately succeeded his grandfather in the important situation, after looking earnestly at the stranger, said—

“In spite of your ragged dress, I can’t help thinking that you are some way or other related to the good old gentleman we have been burying to day.”

“Related to him!” exclaimed the stranger in a tone of voice long remembered by the clerk;—“why he was my father!”

“You lie!” exclaimed a voice from the lower end of the church.

"Trevor Owen, begone! profane not this holy place with such words. You and I have a fearful account to settle; but this is neither fitting time nor place."

Trevor Owen looked around him, and, perceiving that Eleanor's servants had left the church-yard, he hastily followed them.

"I must see my mother's coffin," said the stranger, descending the steps which led to the vault. The clerk left him, and joined a group of the old servants who still lingered in the church-yard, and asked who they imagined the stranger to be?

"Roderic declares that it is our dear young master," said old Griffith, the huntsman; "but that I can't believe, for that poor fellow in the church is little better than a bundle of rags, and to my knowledge, large heaps of gold were sent out by our good old master to the young squire in foreign parts; so, wherever he may have been, he must have had plenty to keep him from want."

The old servants and the clerk at length grew hungry; they quitted the church-yard; and when the stranger returned to it, he found it deserted. He seated himself on a turf grave, shaded from the heat of the "noon-tide sun" by a venerable yew tree, which was believed to have numbered as many centuries as the church against whose walls its funeral branches waved.

There was a loneliness and a majesty in the scenery which surrounded the church-yard in Glyn Llewelyn, admirably fitted to withdraw the thoughts of man from the busy scenes of the world, and to remind him of his own nothingness. On all sides but one it was surrounded by mountains of solemn magnificence: not a single habitation was to be seen from it, and "the hollow murmur of the ocean tide" was the only sound that interrupted the silence which reigned around; and this served but to increase the contemplative feeling already

excited by the solitary church-yard and "the mountains lone."

Long and sadly did the stranger look around him; but at length, after gazing on several newly-made graves, with tears in his eyes, he quitted the church-yard and proceeded at a quick pace along a path which led to Conway. But he must pursue his journey alone, whilst we return to the hall at Glyn Llewelyn.

Little would a stranger have imagined on entering the hall, that a party of mourners were assembled there: bustle and confusion reigned around, and angry voices were heard from all sides, whilst curses of a fearful nature were not wanting. "The funeral baked meats" were suffered to grow cold on the high table, nor was the substantial fare at the lower end of the hall more regarded.

"It is of no use: I will see her!—I will see Miss Llewelyn!" exclaimed a woman whom Trevor Owen was endeavouring to persuade to leave the house.

"My good woman, you are mistaken," said Trevor Owen, in a wheedling manner: "surely, on such a day as this you would not intrude upon Miss Llewelyn?"

"Mistaken, man alive!" retorted Molly Davies, "that's a high joke, truly: as if I could be mistaken about the child I nursed, and loved as if he had been my own! Why, did I not know him the instant he spoke to me last night? Would my heart have jumped up and down for joy in the way it did, had it been the voice of a stranger that asked for a night's lodging? No, no! And to think of his having been turned out of his own house on such a night! Trevor Owen, you and somebody I will not name will be called to account for this; if not in this world, in another."

"You cannot see Miss Llewelyn to-day, my good woman," said Mr. Owen, of Llancarnedd; "but come down to the hall to-morrow, and I will take care that you shall see her and tell her your tale."

"Well, well! my child shall have his own again, in spite of you all: mark my word!" and with a shake of her head at Trevor Owen, which said little less than Lord Burleigh's, she flung out of the house; followed by all of the old servants, who eagerly demanded where their young master had been for so many long years?

Sad was the artless tale she told; but so convincing were the proofs she brought forward of the stranger and Howel Llewelyn being one and the same person, that the most sceptical of the party returned to the hall with light hearts, and bright hopes of soon welcoming their young master back to it again.

Trevor Owen, who had taken the seat of honour at the high table, was so completely lost in thought that he was quite unconscious of the return of the old servants; and when they arose in a body, and drank health, happiness, and a long life to their young master,

Howel Llewelyn, the cup of untasted ale which he held in his hand fell from it on the stone-pavement with a clanging sound: he started from his seat and gazed fiercely at the old men; but, quickly recovering his presence of mind, he called for a fresh cup of ale, and looking around, he smiled and said:—

“ Friends and neighbours, I do not see why we should not have our toast as well as the worthy people at the lower end of the table, I therefore beg to propose—‘The fair representative of this noble house, Miss Llewelyn.’”

To his astonishment and dismay the toast was drunk in solemn silence. As soon as he could frame a proper excuse for his absence he withdrew. All present felt relieved by his departure, and the lately silent party began to converse freely, if not gaily, and to abuse Trevor Owen and Eleanor “to their heart’s content:” then followed a long discussion for and against the stranger proving himself to be Howel Llewelyn.

"Vile woman!" exclaimed Mr. Owen, of Llancarnedd, "I am now convinced that she knew him to be her brother; for when he came amongst us last night, though there was nothing in his manner that would have frightened a dove, yet she shook all over, and turned whiter than her cap."

"Well, indeed, it is a very strange affair," observed one of the guests, "and it is difficult to say how we ought to act in it."

"Take my word for it," said Mr. Owen, "the stranger shall have fair play, for there are few sights I should enjoy equally with that of seeing Eleanor Llewelyn and Trevor Owen sent off these premises."

"Well, suppose then we drink to their speedy departure!" said an old gentleman; and instantly huge jugs of ale were tossed off in honour of the toast. Before the last drops had been quaffed, Trevor Owen suddenly re-appeared; his countenance expressing as many signs of deadly hate "as lean-faced envy

in her loathsome cave," leaving no doubt that a toast so little flattering to his vanity had been heard by him.

Long before the night had set in, a female servant entered the hall and whispered in Trevor Owen's ear: he instantly, in a proud and insolent voice, said:—

"Gentlemen, I am sorry to disturb your revels, but Miss Llewelyn has sent to say that they prevent her sleeping, and that she will thank you to retire to your rooms."

The guests looked at each other in mute astonishment;—could it be a Llewelyn who was guilty of so unparalleled a breach of hospitality as to order men to their beds before they had had time to drink half of their usual quantity of ale!

"Eleanor Llewelyn and be hanged to her!" said a passionate old gentleman, finishing a glass of ale.

"Here I must stay for to-night," exclaimed Mr. Owen, "but, hang me! if ever I enter

this house again if Eleanor keeps possession of it:—disturb her rest, indeed! a lying jade! —why, if all the bulls in North Wales were bellowing in this hall she would not hear them. She a Llewelyn!—no, indeed! I firmly believe that she was changed at nurse.”

CHAPTER IX.

"Many a ane for him makes mane,
But none shall ken where he is gane;
Ower his banes, when they are bare,
The wind shall blaw for ever mair."

ON the evening of this memorable day, Eva Wynn had wandered down to the sea-shore, accompanied by Tywysog. She seated herself on a rock, and wept bitterly, as "in her mind's eye" she saw pass by the melancholy procession which attended her dear, kind friend, Mr. Llewelyn, to his tomb. Tywysog licked her hand, and looked up in her face, as if conscious that all was not right. At this instant, the gigantic shadow of a man was visible on

the sand: Eva, though "she feared no evil," started up, and Tywysog uttered a low growl.

"Eva!" said a voice, which bore so strong a resemblance to that of Howel Llewelyn that she trembled from head to foot, and clung to the rock for support.

"Eva!" repeated the same voice: she uttered not a word; but, springing from the rock, threw herself into the arms of Howel Llewelyn. Long was speech denied to her; for joy appeared to have deprived her of sense and motion, though she had not fainted. Tywysog leaped around his long-lost master, licked his hands and feet, and uttered low whines. At length Eva looked around her and exclaimed,—

"Oh! it is a dream!" but Howel soon convinced her that it was no dream; and a violent fit of crying having relieved her throbbing heart, she became sufficiently composed to listen to his "strange eventful history."

It appeared that whilst pursuing a wild

boar at a distance from his party he had been thrown from his horse, and in falling his head had come in contact with a tree: the blow stunned him, and he lay on the ground in a state of insensibility for many hours. Some wood-cutters, returning to their huts, found him, and humanely bore him to the first hut in that neighbourhood; but it belonged to charcoal-burners, who were miserably poor, and who were possessed of no comforts or medicines. Cold spring water was not spared, however, and in a few minutes Howel opened his eyes, and attempted to rise from the miserable pallet on which he had been laid; but he instantly sank back on it again, being completely overpowered by violent pain in one of his ankles, which had been seriously injured.

Finding all attempts to move unavailing, he looked around him in mute despair. The small hut was filled with charcoal-burners: a black and grim-looking race, who spoke in

an unknown tongue, and who could not comprehend even the signs he made to them. Anguish of mind and body, before night fell, had thrown him into a burning fever.

For many weeks he was confined to his miserable bed, and waited upon by a withered, ugly old woman; but she proved no unskilful leech, and when the fever at length left him, and he had gained sufficient strength to quit his bed, to his inexpressible pleasure, he discovered that his ankle had recovered its strength.

With returning health came a double longing for home; and each day did he take longer walks in the forest, hoping to fall in with some hunters who would point out to him the road to Vienna: with which the wood-cutters and charcoal-burners appeared to be quite unacquainted.

But the hunting season was over, and the joyous sound of the Jäger horn no longer rang along the sides of the rocks and moun-

tains. Howel, believing that he was condemned to spend the months that would intervene ere the hunting would recommence, in the hut of his kind but rude nurse, determined on repaying her for her kindness to the utmost of his abilities, and assisted her in many a household duty which age had rendered irksome to her; and so grateful did she feel for these attentions, that the choicest of her homely fare, and the warmest nook by the charcoal fire were reserved for him.

Weeks passed on, and Howel's good spirits were beginning to desert him, when one morning he perceived, at a short distance from the hut, a rudely-constructed float, with a heavy-looking building at one end of it, sailing slowly down the Danube. He rushed back into the hut, threw into the lap of his astonished hostess several pieces of gold, and long before she had settled what she would purchase with them, he had, by the aid of another piece of gold, made the commander

of the float understand that he wished to be taken on board her : he was soon standing on her deck, and in a few seconds was slowly sailing away from the scene of his captivity.

Howel's dress, though much worn and faded, still bore traces of its ancient splendour ; and one of the sailors, fixing his eyes earnestly upon it, at length addressed him in English, which the man spoke "indifferent well," and asked if he were not a British officer.

So great was Howel's delight at hearing a language which was familiar to his ear that he felt as if he could have bestowed a friendly hug on the mass of dirt, tar, and rags which had uttered it. The sailor, after listening with much interest to Howel's history, volunteered his own in return. Howel's new friend recommended him to leave the float at Buda, and to proceed by the most direct road to Venice ; at which place he assured him he was certain of falling in with a mer-

chant vessel, in which he could secure a passage to England.

From Buda, Howel despatched letters to his mother, and to Eva; but they never reached their place of destination: no uncommon event at this period.

No adventures befell the wanderer on his road to Venice, where, the morning after his arrival, he found a vessel bound for England, and instantly secured a passage in her. On the following day, the wind proving favourable, she sailed gaily out of the Gulf of Venice. But scarcely had she quitted it when she was chased by a privateer. The crew of the merchantman fought with the energy of despair, but they were speedily overpowered by numbers, and the vessel and every soul on board her was carried to Algiers.

The hapless prisoners were offered for sale in the market like cattle; Howel was purchased by an Arab chief, and immediately sent off to the horde.

For some weeks our hero was employed in collecting wood for the horde : a most laborious occupation, and unrelieved by the pity of a Miranda ; and what rendered his condition tenfold more bitter, was his inability to make himself understood by a living being. Vainly did he strive to find

“ Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones——”

Every object which surrounded him served but to remind him of the distance which separated him from home, from friends, and from all “ for which he wished to live, or feared to die.”

But he soon rendered himself popular amongst the females of the horde by his kindness to their children ; and never had he to complain of going supperless to bed, or of being chid for any little awkwardness he might be guilty of, when employed in churning butter or cooking the evening meal.

After he had acquired a slight knowledge of the language spoken by those around him, his lot appeared less intolerable; and the mothers having obtained confidence in him, the elder children were frequently permitted to accompany him to search for wood: gaily would they ramble by his side, and banish for a season his melancholy thoughts.

The hope of making his escape was never absent from his mind: " 't was his prayer by day, his dream by night." But years had passed, and he was still a captive; when his master suddenly died. Howel, taking advantage of the confusion occasioned by this event throughout the horde, filled a bag with meal, and a skin with water; and, just as day began to break, walked towards a thick forest in the neighbourhood of St. Croix: a short distance from which the tents were pitched.

We will not weary our readers with an account of the sufferings and privations which befell the fugitive ere he reached Morocco; for they

would sound very common-place when compared with those voluntarily encountered by travellers in the present day. At Morocco, he fell in with an Englishman, who had resided there for many years, and who supplied him with clothes and a small sum of money ; with which he secured a passage on board a ship bound for Bristol. But misfortunes seemed to follow him ; for after a most tempestuous voyage, the ship was blown quite out of its course, and wrecked on the Irish coast. No lives were, however, lost ; and Howel found that he had a sufficient sum left to carry him to Dublin. But he had not a change of clothes : his scanty wardrobe having been swallowed up by the sea ; and when he reached Dublin he found his purse empty, and was obliged to work his way on board a vessel sailing for Holyhead, as a common sailor.

It was a Sunday morning when he landed, and the church bells were ringing for morning prayers. Years had passed since Howel had

last heard their sacred sound ; and he remained motionless, listening to them with an inward peace he had never hoped to feel again : for, though penniless, he now felt that bed and board were at his command at any house where he might stop and demand it.

At Bangor he saw many a face familiar to him, but when he stopped and spoke, to his dismay not one of his old acquaintance recognised him. The nearer he approached to his home, the more painfully harassing became his anxiety to ascertain if all were well there ; and yet he allowed more than one well-remembered friend to pass him unquestioned, fearing to hear tidings of woe. At a short distance from the Glyn, however, he overtook a woman who he remembered had lived there formerly as upper dairy maid ; and with a desperate effort he addressed her, and asked for Mrs. Llewelyn.

“ Bless me ! and where do you come from ? ” demanded the woman ; “ why I thought every body in North Wales knew that she was dead.”

"Dead! dead!" repeated Howel as if he did not comprehend the meaning of the word; "dead!" and staggering towards a rock, he clung to it for support.

"Poor dear lady! you knew her, then; and everybody that knew her grieved at her death. I cried, for one, as if I had lost my mother. Poor lady! grief for the death of our young master broke her heart. But," she added, looking earnestly in Howel's face, "badly as you are dressed, I think you are like the family at the Hall; so I suppose you are a sort of cousin to the good old gentleman, and are come to attend his funeral."

Howel uttered a deep groan, and pressing his hand to his forehead, exclaimed, "God be merciful to me a sinner, and preserve me from madness." His tongue seemed to cling to the roof of his mouth, and vainly he essayed to pronounce the names of Eva and Wenefrede.

"You will find sad changes going on at the Hall," said the woman; "many of the old ser-

vants are leaving, and the others do little but cry from morning to night: and well they may, poor old creatures, for Miss Llewelyn is master and mistress too, and does every cruel thing her wicked cousin puts into her head. Oh, I am glad poor Miss Wenefrede—kind, good, young lady—is to be married soon, and not left with such bad company. I saw her this morning, and she said she would not remain at the Hall unless Miss Wynn of Plas Conway was allowed to come and see her.”

To hear that Wenefrede and Eva were well, and the latter unmarried, was balm to Howel's deeply wounded spirit; and wishing his communicative companion farewell, he turned up the Glyn. The reception he met with is already known to our readers.

Night closed around Howel and Eva, and the breeze from the sea blew fresh and strong; but so completely were they engrossed with the sorrows of the past, and the bright prospects of the future, that for an hour or two neither

darkness nor cold was regarded; at length the lateness of the hour struck Eva, and she declared that she must return home. Howel accompanied her to the door at Plas Conway, but refused to enter the house: alleging that, in the present excited state of his feelings, he would rather not encounter old Evan; and that, as his appearance at Glyn Llewelyn at an early hour on the following morning would be absolutely necessary, it would be better for him to return for that night to the mountain home of Molly Davies. Eva said the way was long and dangerous, and urged his remaining in Conway; but he only laughed at her fears, and kissed away her fast-falling tears. Tywysog refused to quit Howel; and Eva, patting him on his shaggy head, bade him guard his master well.

The open-mouthed, astonished, and noisy delight of old Evan and the whole establishment at Plas Conway, on learning from Eva that Howel Llewelyn was alive and well, quite

baffles our powers of description : not one of the servants would quit the room till Eva had related, more than once, the whole of Howel's adventures by sea and land.

When at length they left her, Eva found that joy had banished sleep ; so walking to the window, she gazed out on the river, and the dark woods beyond it, now lighted up by the bright rays of the moon. Often as Eva had gazed on this view, never had it appeared so perfectly calm and lovely at this instant. Probably her own happy feeling, like distance, lent enchantment to the view : be that as it may, she stood for nearly an hour by the window, lost in bright hopes of the future.

All the household had retired to rest, when Eva was startled by hearing a low whine from a dog. She listened with breathless attention: the whine was repeated. Trembling from head to foot, she threw open the window, and in an agony of alarm, called "Tywysog !" A dog

instantly ran towards the window, raised his head up to it, and howled.

Horror-struck, Eva rushed out of the room, and called up the servants. When Evan beheld the wild gestures of the dog, and heard his loud howls, he looked at him in dismay, and at length exclaimed,—

“St. David preserve us! it was nothing but poor master Howel's spirit that you saw to-night, Miss Eva. I never heard a dog howl in this manner, unless he had seen a ghost.”

“You will drive me mad,” said Eva, pushing old Evan out of her way, and passing so quickly out of the house, that he had no time to stop her.

Tywysog ran before her, and she followed him at so rapid a pace, that Evan was soon left in the rear; and even the less aged and more active servants found it difficult to keep up with her and her guide. The top of Sychnant was gained in an incredibly short time. Ty-

wysog suddenly stopped, and smelt eagerly about the ground ; then, raising his head up in the air, howled long and dismally, filling the hearts of Eva and her attendants with horror and affright. Eva bent over the fearful precipice, and gazed amongst the black shadows which clung to its sides, but no human form, living or dead, was to be seen. Tywysog stood by her side, snuffing the air and whining.

The moon, which had been partially hid by a mountain, now rose high above it, and rendered all objects distinctly visible. Tywysog appeared at this instant to have caught sight of something ; for he suddenly rushed forward, then]stopped, and seemed to be listening to some sound that was unheard by all ears but his. Presently a faint noise arose as of oars striking against the waves ; Tywysog instantly darted down a rock, and uttering a fierce, angry bark, rushed round a projecting cliff, and was lost to the sight of the

astonished and anxious party on the crag above. A savage yell from the dog, and a scream of agony from a human being, speedily followed, and then all was still. But soon a sound as of many voices appeared to ascend the rock: then the dash of oars against the waves became again distinctly audible, and a boat was seen making fast out to sea; but the wind suddenly veered round, and she sailed close inland, under the rock on which Eva stood. An apparently lifeless body lay at the bottom of the boat, and a tall figure, seated at the stern, was busily engaged in stanching a wound in the sufferer's chest, from which the blood was flowing fast. Eva, with the boldness of despair, clung to a projecting rock, and gazed downwards towards the boat, to endeavour to obtain a sight of the features of the wounded man. A large stone rolled from the side of the mountain into the sea, and struck the side of the boat; the wounded man raised his head, startled by the sound, and the rays of the

moon fell strong upon his upturned face—
Eva, in a voice which made the ears of all
who heard it tingle, exclaimed,—

“’Tis he! ’tis he!—’tis Trevor Owen!”

Her arms fell powerless by her side; and
had not one of her attendants caught hold of
her, she would have fallen headlong into the
sea. Vainly did she entreat, nay, command
the man to release her: he heeded her not,
but lifting her from the ground, carried her
towards Conway, followed by the female ser-
vants; whilst the men turned towards the
lonely village of Llanfairvechan, to inquire if
any of its inhabitants had seen Howel on his
return from Conway.

They entered several huts, and found their
inmates fast asleep; but at last a glimmer of
light attracted their attention to a hut at the
end of the village; they entered it, and found
an old fisherman and his wife, seated at a
frugal supper: the fisherman having just re-
turned from a fishing expedition beyond the

Orm's head. The old man said he had observed a boat lying-to under Pen Maen Mawr; that he had halloosed to the crew, and wished them a prosperous voyage; but not receiving any answer, he had fancied that she was a smuggling cutter, and took no more notice of her.

But no sooner had the servants of Plas Conway told their tale, than the old fisherman pushed his half-eaten supper on one side, and bade the men follow him to the shore. A speck on the horizon showed that Trevor Owen was already beyond their reach; but the old fisherman pushed off his boat, and, accompanied by the servants, rowed to the spot under Pen Maen Mawr, down which Tywysog had rushed.

On landing on the narrow beach, an exclamation of horror was uttered by the whole party, at perceiving the stones spotted with large drops of blood. Guided by the spots, the party soon reached the mouth of a deep

but narrow cave, from the mouth of which trickled a small stream of dark gore. The men looked at each other, and shuddered from head to foot; at length, the boldest of the party ventured to look into the cave, and perceived by the light of the moon, not (as he had feared) the murdered body of Howel Llewelyn, but that of his faithful dog Tywysog. A fearful gash in his throat told the death he had died. Dreadful curses were uttered against the slayer of the noble animal.

“Why, if that infernal villain, Trevor Owen, did not cut the throat of the poor beast himself!” exclaimed the old fisherman, picking up a large clasped knife from the beach: the knife had a silver handle, with the crest and initials of Trevor Owen engraved on it. “Well! I could swear to that knife amongst a thousand!” exclaimed the old man. “Oh! we may live to see him hanged yet!” he added, in an exulting tone.

At a short distance from the cave a deep

impression on the sand was visible, which looked as if a tall figure had recently fallen upon it from the rocks above.

“ Oh ! that wretch murdered young Master Llewelyn as well as his dog !—I see it all now : he waylaid him on his return from Conway, threw him over the rocks, and then carried his body out with him in that boat you speak of to sea,” said the old fisherman, with a deep-drawn sigh. He then took up the body of poor Tywysog, and laid it down at the bottom of his boat ; declaring that he would bury him in a decent grave, for that he was a thousand times more like a Christian than those who had killed him.

It was now agreed that a messenger should be sent to the house of Molly Davies, to ascertain if any tidings of Howel Llewelyn had reached her ; and that the rest of the party should proceed to the Glyn, to inquire if anything was known there of Trevor Owen.

Molly Davies had sat up all night waiting

for the return of her foster-child; but day began to dawn and he had not made his appearance, and she was growing seriously alarmed about him, when the arrival of the servants from Plas Conway confirmed her worst fears. The grief, the rage, and the awful curses denounced against the murderers of her child we will not attempt to describe; but will change the scene to the hall at Glyn Llewelyn.

Early as was the hour, many of the guests were assembled there, anxious to quit so inhospitable a mansion as soon as they could procure their horses. The old fisherman advanced before the rest of his party, and in an abrupt and unceremonious manner demanded, when Trevor Owen had last been seen? A servant present answered, that the hall had been cleared, and all the household sent to their beds before the clock struck nine, and he did not believe that any one had seen Trevor Owen since. The fisherman

now told his tale of horror with a simple pathos that touched the hearts of all present. No time was to be lost, and Mr. Owen, of Luncarnedd, followed by all the gentlemen present, proceeded to the bed-room usually occupied by Trevor Owen: it was untenanted, and the bed had evidently not been slept in that night.

"We must not stand on idle punctilio," said Mr. Owen, in a tone of great excitement; and he knocked loudly at the door of Eleanor's sleeping-room. She opened it herself.

"May I ask what has happened?" said she: gazing first at one pale, horror-struck countenance, and then at another, with a composure that was evidently assumed.

Mr. Owen, as briefly as possible, related the dreadful history he had just been made acquainted with: he kept his eyes on her face, and never removed them till he had finished it. Paler she could not grow, but

the knitting of her eyebrows, and the convulsive workings of the muscles of her face, showed the conflict that was going on in her breast; and when she at length spoke, it was with considerable difficulty, but yet her look and tone were proud.

“Gentlemen, for the absence of my cousin I can easily account: business of an important nature has long required his presence in Ireland, but my lamented father’s illness and death prevented his setting off till yesterday evening. Before he could sail for Dublin it was necessary for him to see a person residing in Conway; and if Miss Wynn really saw him in a boat, he must have been returning from that place. But as to the horrid story of his having cut the throat of poor Tywysog, you must excuse my believing it; unless rather better proofs of his guilt are laid before me than those advanced by a half idiotical fisherman, who has for years past borne a deadly hatred towards him.

No, gentlemen, you must pardon me, but I must believe my cousin innocent till he is proved guilty:—I believe, Mr. Owen, that is a rule laid down by all judges.”

“Miss Llewelyn,” said Mr. Owen, sternly, “you may be made to feel how deeply you are believed to be implicated in the crimes of your cousin. You waste your time in trying to prove him innocent of the murder of your brother’s favourite dog. Look!” said he, holding up the knife,—“look at this fearful proof of his guilt!”

Eleanor caught hold of the back of a chair, or she would have fallen on the floor: she could not speak, but she motioned away, with her trembling hands, the blood-stained knife, which Mr. Owen still held before her eyes. At length, looking fiercely around, she exclaimed: “I am innocent!—I am innocent!”

“Eleanor Llewelyn, would that I could believe you!” said Mr. Owen, more in sorrow

than in anger. "Oh! Eleanor, I pity you!—I pity you!"

At the word "pity," Eleanor sprang from her chair, and, in a voice of fury, bade all present to leave her room—to leave her house:—"And remember," said she, seizing Mr. Owen by the arm, and pushing him out of the room, "if ever you dare to darken my doors again, you shall dearly rue the day."

At this instant Wenefrede, pale with fright, made her appearance, and asked what fresh misfortune had occurred?

"Eleanor will tell you all, my poor child!" said Mr. Owen, kissing her cheek; "but remember that, should Llewelyn Hall grow too hot to hold you, you will find a comfortable home at Llancarnedd."

"Thank you," said Wenefrede, hardly conscious of what she said.

"Shut the door on those people," exclaimed Eleanor. Wenefrede mechanically obeyed her.

"Come hither, Wenefrede, and sit down:

I have news of a very distressing nature to communicate. The artful impostor, who tried to pass himself off for poor Howel, has most unaccountably disappeared ; and Tywysog, with his throat cut, has been found lying in a cave under Pen Maen Mawr.

“ Eleanor! Eleanor! if Tywysog followed him from Conway he was no impostor—he was Howel;” and Wenefrede burst into tears. “ But you say he has disappeared: can no one say where he is gone ?”

“ Mr. Owen is afraid that on returning from Conway he fell over a rock into the sea, and so perished,” said Eleanor: who had the grace to hide her face in her handkerchief whilst uttering this bare-faced falsehood.

Wenefrede uttered a scream of agony, a fit of laughing hysterics followed, and she was carried to her room by the frightened servants: they were soon ordered from it by Eleanor, who dreaded their repeating to Wenefrede the tale told by the fisherman.

Wenefrede, who had been laid on her bed, at length fell asleep; but it was a troubled and unrefreshing sleep: her hands moved convulsively, and she muttered incoherent speeches.

"That will do," at length she exclaimed, starting up in the bed, and twisting her handkerchief into the semblance of a rope; "now I will let myself down and look for him. Howel!" she exclaimed, with an energy that awoke her; and fixing her eyes, bright with fever, on Eleanor, she said, "Howel! Howel! Eleanor, where is he?"

"Wenefrede, dear Wenefrede, would that I could tell you!" said Eleanor.

"And Trevor Owen: oh! Eleanor, is he here?"

"No; he is gone to Ireland."

"Should he ever dare to return here," cried Wenefrede, in a tone quite at variance with her gentle nature, "I will have him hanged for the murder of ——"

"Hush, hush! dearest Wenefrede," exclaimed Eleanor: laying her down in the bed, from which she was in the act of springing.

Eleanor sat listening to her sister's incoherent wandering remarks till late in the day; taking the refreshments brought her by the side of her sister's bed: fearing to trust a servant with Wenefrede, lest she might be heard to denounce Trevor Owen as a murderer.

The evening was dark and stormy; but it was bright and calm when compared with the feelings of Eleanor. Suddenly Wenefrede's burning hand fell upon hers, and, in a tone of bitter agony, Eleanor exclaimed,—

"She is dangerously ill.—Oh! if she should die, my punishment would be greater than I could bear."

CHAPTER X.

"My burden'd heart would break
Should I not curse them.—Poison be their drink!
Gall, worse than gall, the daintiest meat they taste!
Their sweetest shade a grove of Cypress trees!
Their sweetest prospects murd'ring basilisks!

HENRY VI.

EVA, finding all resistance vain, had allowed herself to be placed on her pony, which old Evan had brought for the purpose, and was conveyed back to Plas Conway; but vainly did Peggy entreat her to lie down on her bed. Eva declared she was not fatigued, and that she should go mad if she did not move about; and for hour after hour she continued to pace her room in a wild and hurried manner.

"Oh, my dear young lady!" at length exclaimed Peggy, "if not for my sake, for that of your mother, try and get a little rest."

"Rest!" repeated Eva, in a tone of deep wretchedness; "there is none for me in this world. Rest, when my brain is on fire! But I feel nothing here," she said, pressing her hand on her heart: "no pain; no, it is turned to stone."

"God help you, poor child!" said Peggy; "but you must take a glass of wine, and try and compose yourself;" and so saying she left the room.

Eva, hearing the sound of many voices in the hall, slipped down a back staircase, and, unobserved, listened to the account which the servants, who had just returned from the Glyn, were giving of Eleanor's conduct.

Scarcely had Eva reached her own room again when Peggy entered with a cooling mixture in her hand. Eva seized it with

frantic eagerness, and then, throwing herself on her bed, begged to be left alone, saying that she would try and procure a little sleep.

Peggy left the room ; but scarcely had the sound of her footsteps died away in the long gallery, when Eva started up from the bed, wrapped her riding cloak around her, drew its hood closely over her head, and, with a stealthy step glided down the back stairs and into the stable. There, as she hoped, she found her pony standing still saddled in his stall ; she instantly mounted him, and proceeded down the steep main street at a fearful pace : nor did she slacken it till she reached the ferry. Though several persons spoke to Eva, during their passage to the opposite shore, she evidently heard them not ; but sat with her eyes fixed on the bottom of the boat : once, and once only, did she exhibit any sense of hearing what was passing around her. One of the passengers mentioned the long illness of a neighbour,

which he ascribed to an enemy having written his name in the book kept by the priest at St. Ælian's well.

"And was it written there?" demanded Eva, eagerly.

"Well, indeed, yes," replied the man; "his wife saw it there with her own eyes, and the priest told her if she would bring him five shillings that he would blot it out; but before she could get so much money together her poor husband died."

"Died!" repeated Eva, while a strange unnatural smile passed over her lips. She then once more fixed her eyes on the bottom of the boat, and did not raise them again till it reached the opposite shore, when she mounted her pony and rode off at a rapid pace; nor did she slacken it till she arrived at Penmaen Rhos.

Lost in deep thought, neither the dangers of the road, nor the magnificence of the wild scenery which surrounded her, drew from her

one glance of terror or admiration. And to what spot was Eva bound? To the cursing well—the well of St. Ælian. Her road lay for several miles up a rugged, steep, and lonely path, where speed became impracticable; and the greatest vigilance was necessary on the part of the pony, to prevent his stumbling over the slippery stones which lay in his way.

Eva at length found herself on the edge of an extensive and barren heath. She looked around her, but no signs of human habitations met her view: a church, with its lonely churchyard, which she perceived at the verge of the dreary waste, served but to increase the superstitious terrors which were every moment gaining ground in her heart; but they were unmixed with any feeling of compunction for the misery she believed she was on the eve of bringing down on the heads of Trevor Owen and Eleanor Llewelyn. Eva had truly said her brain was on fire, and the “poison of deep grief” seemed to have filled

with evil passions a heart, till this hour, the home of every Christian virtue. She had perceived a dark, shapeless pile across the heath, from which suddenly arose a cloud of smoke, and conjecturing that it proceeded from the miserable hut of the priest of St. Ellan, she rode slowly towards it; working her deluded spirit up to the belief that, as hers was "woe above woe, grief more than common grief," the means she was about to resort to, to avenge herself on the destroyers of her happiness, were blameless.

" A fearful silence, and a solitude
That made itself be felt,"

reigned around; and the barking of a dog, or any sound that indicated that human beings inhabited the spot, would have been music to the ears of Eva. During the last century cultivation has spread its green and yellow wand over this lonely heath, and a road passes by, and cottages have sprung up in the neigh-

bourhood of the once desolate and dreaded well. The feelings of awe with which Eva approached the well were inspired solely by superstition, for a more rude or unimposing edifice never was erected over a stream productive of such ceaseless wealth. A rude wall of unchiselled stone surrounded the well; and Eva, dismounting from her pony, lent over the well, and gazed on the clear but shallow waters which it enclosed.

Long did she continue to gaze, unconscious of everything but her own misery; when, suddenly the thought of the hundreds who had pined away in sickness and sorrow, believing that the curse of the saint was upon them, occurred to her, and a cold shudder ran through her whole frame. The power exerted by the worthless priest of St. Ælian over his innumerable votaries, was as great as that possessed by pope or priest among the most bigoted of Romanists. He was not only addressed in the words of Balak to Balaam,—

“I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed ;” but after a miserable being whose name had been entered in his book of curses, had, at an expense which would probably impoverish him for life, induced the mercenary priest to erase it, the deluded creature would probably find, in a short time, that an enemy had again entered his name in the record of crime kept by the priest ; and that he must pine away in misery, or pay the exorbitant sum demanded for erasing, for the second time, his name from the book—the fearful book. Hundreds, nay thousands of trembling hands turned over the pages of that book during the year, to ascertain if the name of a friend or foe was entered there.

Could the stones around the well have told of all the curses that had been uttered over them, the boldest heart would probably have quailed, and few would have been found hardy enough to remain and listen to the tale ; for

above them every evil passion that ever debased the human heart had been unblushingly laid bare—upon them the fawning hypocrite had thrown aside his veil—the cowardly villain had laid down the price of blood, and exulted in the prospect of a sudden death awaiting his foe: there a pale trembling girl had called down curses on a faithless lover; and, not satisfied with entering his name in a book which was to condemn him to misery, had inscribed also that of the innocent and unconscious being who now possessed his fickle heart.

Feeble hands had been held above those stones; and voices, rendered querulous by old age, had called down curses on the head of some neighbour, whose “evil eye” they averred had occasioned death amongst their flocks and herds.

Eva’s melancholy musings were at length broken in upon by approaching footsteps, and turning suddenly round, she started, and scarce suppressed a scream, at perceiving a man of a

most wild and ruffian-like appearance standing close by her side. He was short in stature, with hands and feet strangely too large for his height and figure; his forehead broad, and projecting far over his dark beetle brows; the exact colour of his eyes it was difficult to ascertain, for he seldom raised them from the ground; his mouth was large, and the lower lip of remarkable thickness: there was a withering look in the smile with which he regarded Eva, which filled her heart with terror.

It might have caused a bolder heart than hers to quail; for she felt that she was alone with this fearful man, on a desolate heath, where no scream for aid, however great her peril, could reach the ears of a human being. But at length, rendered desperate with fear, she looked boldly in the face of her companion, and asked if he were not the priest of St. Ælian; and being answered in the affirmative, she bade him enter the names of Trevor.

Owen and Eleanor Llewelyn in his book. Eva watched him, with the eagerness of a wild cat in the act of grasping her prey.

"Write the names again and again," she exclaimed with a wild laugh; "let them be doubly, trebly cursed."

"The fees must then be trebled," replied the panderer to that most unchristian-like of human passions—revenge!

"I care not for gold—give me but revenge. Look, look!" she exclaimed in a tone of exultation bordering on madness. At this instant the beams of an autumn sun fell full upon the page. "Look, oh, look! you wrote the names in ink, but an avenging angel has traced them in blood—the blood of a murdered brother!"

The priest, hardened as he was, gazed on the blood-red writing with horror; and before the reflection of the red rays of the sun had died away, he had closed the book with a trembling hand.

"Howel Llewelyn, you are avenged!" said Eva; and after presenting three pieces of gold to the priest, which called up a horrible grin of delight on his sinister countenance, she quitted the well without one feeling of remorse.

"Poor thing! grief has turned her brain," said the priest; "but I should be very thankful if craziness would send a dozen such rich women weekly to the well."

The sun had set, and the moon had risen before Eva reached Penmaen Rhos, and her eyes rested on a scene so calm, so fair, that it seemed for a brief space to speak peace to her troubled spirit; but the poisoned arrow soon rankled afresh within her breast, and looking up towards the bright blue sky, she exclaimed, in a heart-broken voice, "He is dead!" and she might have added, with the heart-stricken King Lear, "Oh! that way madness lies! let me shun that. No more of that"—for, with a wild look, she urged on

her pony at a fearful pace, and stopped not till she reached the ferry-house.

On arriving at Plas Conway, she dashed into the stable-yard, and encountered several servants, who had just returned from a long and unsuccessful search after her. Old Evan and Peggy wept for joy on beholding her.

"Oh! where, where have you been, my dear young lady?" asked Evan.

"To hell!" answered Eva; "and I have good news for you, Evan: I found plenty of room there for Eleanor Llewelyn and Trevor Owen, and they will sleep there to-night."

"My dear, dear Miss Eva!" sobbed Peggy; but Eva had fainted, and, without once opening her eyes, was undressed and put into her bed.

Peggy summoned all the old women in Conway who were famous for their knowledge and cure of "all the ills that flesh is heir to;" but Eva's illness baffled their skill, for they could not "minister to a mind diseased;" and

when, on the evening of the following day, Mrs. Wynn arrived, she found Eva alarmingly ill of a brain fever.

One evening, when her death was hourly expected, she suddenly fell into a slumber as sweet as that of a child, "whom neither thoughts disturb nor cares encumber," from which she did not awake till a late hour on the following morning. Mrs. Wynn had remained during the night seated by the bed of her child, fearing to move lest she should awake her, and yet unable to refrain from now and then leaning forward to ascertain if she really breathed.

Eva at last awoke, and asked, "Where am I?" but quickly added in a calm, natural voice, "I see I am on earth. Oh! dearest mother, I have had such a happy dream! I thought I was in heaven, and all I loved on earth were with me; but you are still here, and for your sake, I am glad it was but a dream;" and throwing her wasted arms around

the neck of her mother, she kissed her over and over again. From this day, Eva gradually recovered her strength; and when able to bear the journey, was removed to the house of her eldest sister at Castle Craig.

Mrs. Wynn, feeling that Plas Conway could never more be a home of happiness for Eva, determined upon quitting it; and made arrangements for residing on a small property she possessed in Merionethshire. At the earnest request of Eva, Mrs. Wynn, before she quitted Conway, paid a visit to Catryn Hên, and urged her to consent to being removed to the comfortable house of her granddaughter, at Conway.

The poor old woman had been bed-ridden for upwards of a year, and consented, at length, to the proposal; and one fine moonlight night, four strong and trusty bearers were sent by Mrs. Wynn, with a litter, to the hut, and the aged and afflicted woman was carefully conveyed to the house of her grand-

child, and there closed a long life of misery in peace and comfort. The vicar of Conway paid her frequent visits; and several months before she died, had convinced her that her prayers of penitence would be heard, and banished from her mind the horrid idea which had "lashed her soul to madness," that she was a doomed woman.

CHAPTER XI.

"The hall of Cynddylan is gloomy to-night;
I weep, for the grave has extinguished its light;
The beam of the lamp from its summit is o'er,
The blaze of its hearth shall give welcome no more!
The hall of Cynddylan is voiceless and still,
The sound of its harpings hath died on the hill!
Be silent for ever, thou desolate scene,
Nor let e'en an echo recall what hath been !

HEMANS.

FOR several weeks Wenefrede was confined, by sickness, to her chamber; and when at length she quitted it, and took her usual seat at the table in the hall, what a melancholy sight presented itself! for many of the old servants, having been rendered independent by the will of their late master, had left the Glyn, and strangers filled their seats. A

mournful silence reigned around, and old Roderic's harp was mute: sad longings filled the heart of Wenefrede; for those "whose long-loved mien, in earthly home" could never gladden her eyes again.

And where, oh! where was Herbert Gladstone? Was he too dead? For not a line had she received from him during her deep sorrows and long illness. Yet though she knew it not, Herbert had written repeatedly, and had paid more than one visit to the Glyn, in the hope of seeing her; but Eleanor dared not give her the letters, or permit her to see Herbert, till the reports, then rife, of Eleanor's participation in the murder of her brother, had been proved to be groundless. A letter from Lord Gladstone arrived at this time to Eleanor, which aroused every evil passion in her heart, and caused her to stamp with rage. Its contents were certainly far from being of a soothing nature; for in a plain unvarnished style, they informed her that until the myste-

rious disappearance of Howel Llewelyn had been satisfactorily accounted for, Wenefrede could never be the bride of Herbert Gladstone. This was a blow Eleanor had never anticipated; and even her proud spirit bowed under it for a brief space.

Time rolled on, and Wenefrede received no letter from Herbert. That he had forsaken her she could not believe: she herself loved too truly; and as soon as she could hold a pen, she wrote him a long letter, which expressed such pure and devoted attachment, that Eleanor, who had intercepted it, wept as she read it. At length, with a trembling hand, she threw it on some sods, blazing on the earth; and as she watched it slowly wasting away, she exclaimed,—

“Better so should waste her frame than that the name of Llewelyn should be disgraced by her pleading for the love of one who has deserted her. No; better, a thousand times, that she should die than live to

sue and sue in vain ; and so perish," she added fiercely, while she threw a hot sod on an unconsumed portion of the letter, "all trace of weakness on the part of a Llewelyn."

Vainly did Eleanor strive to convince herself that she was "more sinned against than sinning : " a still small voice that would be heard whispered in her ear the fearful truth.

Mrs. Wynn had written to Wenefrede, and offered her a home at her new abode in Merionethshire ; but this letter had shared the fate of those sent by Herbert, and never reached the hands of Wenefrede ; who, miserable at hearing no tidings of her dearly-loved friends, rode over one morning, unattended, to Conway. But what was her dismay at finding the

house at Plas Cónway uninhabited, and at learning that Mrs. Wynn had left it for ever.

"For ever!" said Wenefrede, in a tone of despair.

"Yes, miss," said the person addressed. "After that black-hearted villain, Trevor Owen, had put poor Master Llewelyn out of the way, Madam Wynn and Miss Eva, poor dear young lady! could not bear this place any longer."

Wenefrede's tongue refused to utter another word: horror-stricken and faint she turned towards home.

"Home!" she at length exclaimed; "oh, what a home! a home where I may meet Trevor Owen,—a murderer! Oh! no wonder my friends have deserted me. Herbert"—but grief choked her words.

On arriving at the Glyn, the very sight of

which had become hateful to her, she avoided the grand entrance-door, and slipped unobserved up to her own room. On her dressing-table Wenefrede found a note in Eleanor's handwriting, stating that she had been summoned unexpectedly into Anglesea, and that she would probably be detained there for many days.

"Oh! Eleanor; and have I lived to rejoice in your absence?" said Wenefrede, in a tone of anguish. "Oh! who on earth have I now left to care for? Eva—yes, yes, she loves me still."

Eleanor was detained a fortnight from home, and deep was her distress at beholding Wenefrede's altered appearance on her return.

"There is death in that brilliant eye: there is death in that thin pale hand," was the

almost distracting thought which passed through her mind, as, with all but a mother's love, she kissed her agitated and trembling sister.

During Eleanor's absence, Wenefrede one morning received a packet from Eva Wynn, which contained a beautiful locket, and a long letter. In the locket was enclosed a lock of Eva's hair, and the principal portion of the letter was occupied by a most eloquent appeal to the love Wenefrede had once entertained for her and her mother, and a request that she would prove that their friendship was still dear to her, by paying them a visit in Merionethshire.

"Dear, dear Eva! yes, I will go to you and your kind mother," exclaimed Wenefrede, while big round tears fell on the letter. But suddenly the letter dropped from her hand, and she said, "No; I will die here;"

and pressing her hand on her heart, she observed, "There is something here that tells me 'my days will soon be numbered.'"

Eleanor, who was unconscious of Wenefrede's visit to Plas Conway, was totally at a loss to account for the coldness with which she was received on her return from Anglesea; and as day by day she became more deeply conscious that her presence was disagreeable to her sister, her agony of mind could only be compared to that occasioned by the gnawing of "the worm that never sleeps, that never dies."

Wenefrede soon grew too weak to rise from her bed; and by its side watched Eleanor night and day. The dying girl never uttered a complaint; her grief was too deep to find comfort

"In word, or sigh, or tear."

It was a wild stormy evening in November; but the storm that raged without was unregarded by the mournful watchers by the deathbed of Wenefrede Llewelyn. That her spirit was about to quit this world she seemed perfectly conscious, and drawing a ring that had been given her by Herbert Gladstone from her finger, she requested her favourite attendant would send it, with her parting farewell, to Eva Wynn. She then begged that all the old servants who still remained in the hall might be sent for: to each she presented a trifling gift, expressing a hope that they would pray for her, and in a short time sank into a heavy sleep, from which, in this world, she was "to know no waking."

At length a deep-drawn sigh announced that "the silver cord was broken," and that her pure spirit had quitted its tenement

of clay. A tear glistened on her eyelids, but a smile rested on her lips ; and she looked like a beautiful child " who, tired with long play at close of summer day, lies down and slumbers."

Grief, instead of softening Eleanor's heart, appeared to harden it, and render it more stern: with tearless eyes she stood gazing on the lovely but lifeless form of the only being she had ever loved; and when the attendants, with well-meant kindness, urged her to leave the chamber of death, she fiercely bade them begone and leave her with the corpse.

Several hours passed and she still stood gazing upon it; when the venerable clergyman of the parish, who had been a daily visitor of Wenefrede's during her illness, tapped gently at the door, and begged to be admitted. Eleanor, on hearing his well-known voice,

ordered him to enter. She was still standing by the side of the bed, and, pointing to the lifeless form of her sister, she exclaimed, in a tone of bitter mockery,—

“You have often told me of the mercy and goodness of God: I feel it at this instant. Look who is lying on that bed a corpse—my sister—the only being I ever loved.”

“Eleanor Llewelyn,” exclaimed the clergyman, in a tone of solemnity, not unmixed with horror, “utter not such blasphemy.”

“Do not waste your words upon me,” exclaimed Eleanor, passionately; “go to my attendants if you must preach: bid them be patient, bid them be resigned: fools like them will listen to you.”

“Eleanor Llewelyn,” said the clergyman, whilst the tears rolled down his cheeks, “I pity you; but remember your own misdeeds

have caused 'your house to be left unto you desolate.'"

The night before the day appointed for the funeral of Wenefrede arrived, and preparations for observing it with pomp and solemnity were made: cousins even to the sixth and seventh degree had been bidden, but the evening closed in, and only a few needy relations had made their appearance. Vainly did Eleanor order fresh sods to be heaped on the hearth, and more lamps to be placed around the coffin: it failed to disperse the gloom, and served but to show the empty seats and deserted state of the hall.

Few can gaze unmoved on the corpse of a youthful, good, and beautiful being; but a race which knew not Wenefrede had sprung up since Mr. Llewelyn's death, and a sigh on passing her coffin, or "a tear forgot as soon as shed," was the only sign of grief exhibited

for the loss of one who for years "had filled that hall with glee,"—whose footsteps had made music to the ears of her doating parents, and whose beauty and goodness had been the theme of praise for miles around.

No sooner were the prayers finished, than Eleanor, starting from her knees, seized a lamp, and without casting a glance on the coffin rushed out of the hall. On the following morning she was at the side of the coffin, distributing the white bread, "nor was she heard to sigh or seen to weep;" but when the bearers raised the coffin to carry it to its long home, exhausted nature gave way, and before those around her could catch her, she had sunk on the earth in a swoon.

Numbers of relations and friends, and a whole procession of old servants, amongst whom was observed Jane Pierce, joined the small group of mourners as they rested at

the gate of the churchyard; but when the last sad rites were paid, not a single friend or neighbour returned to the hall: mounting their horses they all rode slowly and sadly away.

One mourner—for such his deep-drawn sighs and mourning cloak discovered him to be—remained by the side of the unclosed tomb: believing himself to be alone, he threw back the hood of his cloak and exhibited to old Griffith the features of Herbert Gladstone.

A few more pages and our “o’er true tale is told.” Shakspeare has observed that “the web of our life is of a mangled yarn, good and ill together,” and such most truly did Eva Wynn find hers to be; for years of misery were succeeded by years of calm, and cheerfulness, once so conspicuous a feature in her character, gradually resumed its sway. Many suitors, attracted by her beauty, her

numberless amiable qualities, and the interest excited by her sad fate, tried to win her love, but in vain ; for though Eva, for the sake of her mother, exerted herself, and even wished to live, yet "the world was dull, flat, and unprofitable" in her eyes: she declared that "love is not love that bends with the remover to remove," and that no second love could ever fill her heart.

But Eva never allowed the selfishness of grief to interfere with her duty ; and though "a note of music, summer's eve or spring," might recall to her mind one for whom she "had loved to live," yet she never indulged in the yearnings for solitude they would call up : fearing that her absence, or traces of grief on her countenance, might occasion pain to her mother. Thus calmly did the days of Eva pass by, whilst her time was occupied in watching over the declining years of her

mother, in administering to the wants of her poor neighbours, and in instructing one, and not unfrequently two or three, of her nephews or nieces. To them no severer punishment could be devised for bad conduct than a prohibition from paying a visit to "aunt Eva:" aunt Eva was never cross; aunt Eva had as exhaustless a stock of stories as Scheherazade; aunt Eva, in short, was in their eyes the most perfect of human beings.

Old Evan, having attained the age of four score, died suddenly; and his kind, good mistress did not long survive him.

After Mrs. Wynn's death, two of Eva's nieces resided entirely with her; and when the days for mourning outwardly for her mother had passed, for the sake of her young charge she determined upon mixing once more with a world she thought she had for-

saken for ever, and carried them to her aunt's house in London.

Here we may as well say a few parting words of Herbert Gladstone. He left the churchyard of Glyn Llewelyn "a sadder and a better man:" nor was the deep and salutary impression then left upon his mind ever effaced; and though he was too young a man to feel that for him "joy had no balm, or affliction no sting," yet it was long before a second attachment occupied his heart, and to his dying day he thought of his lost Wenefrede with a tenderness and regret, that his wife, could she have read his heart, might not have quite approved of, although her rival was a saint in heaven.

Eva lived to a great age; but her intellect and cheerfulness were unimpaired, and she occupied her usual seat in the parish church on the last Sabbath day she was to commemo-

inorate on earth. A stupor came over her suddenly in the evening, and before sun-rise her race on earth was run. Long and truly was she mourned for by relations, friends and servants; for of her it might have been said that

“None knew her but to love her;
None named her but to praise.”

The day of her funeral was a day of gloom throughout the neighbourhood, and the church-yard was filled at an early hour by persons of all classes, whilst the tears of the widow and the orphan fell upon her coffin.

For many years the spot where her remains were interred was looked upon as holy ground; and

“Fair maids and village hinds would bring
Each opening flower of early spring,”

and strew them o'er her early grave.

What a melancholy contrast did the latter days of Eleanor Llewelyn present! For her sister she long and passionately mourned, as one who had no hope; and it might have been recorded of her, as of Henry I., that she never smiled again.

For weeks she shut herself up in her own chamber, and refused to see even the clergyman of the parish: the only person who willingly offered to break in upon her solitude. She was mistress of Llewelyn Hall; but she might have exclaimed with even greater bitterness of spirit than did her namesake, Eleanor of Gloucester,

"No; dark shall be my light, and night my day;
To think upon my pomp shall be my hell."

The solitude of her own chamber at length grew painful; but she dreaded still more the solitude of the hall, and its deserted hearth.

What would she not have given at this time for the society of Jane Pierce? and how soothing would it have been to her heart to have possessed even the affections of a dog, who would have been her companion by day, and watched by her often-sleepless couch by night.

One evening she suddenly ordered a servant to bring up her father's favourite greyhound; he remained quietly by her side as long as she caressed him, but the instant her hand was withdrawn he grew restless, and evidently was on the watch to make his escape, which he effected the first time the door was opened. Eleanor had "sown the wind, and she was now reaping the whirlwind;" and she buried her face in her hands, and sat for many minutes silent and motionless. The proud, the beautiful, the rich, the highly-gifted

Eleanor Llewelyn might have exclaimed, with the wretched outcast in the dock, "I have not a friend on earth!"

Late one evening Eleanor received a letter from her agent in Montgomeryshire, who complained of letters unanswered, and gently hinted at bills unpaid.

"True, most true," exclaimed Eleanor; "I have thought of late but of the dead. But I will shake off this lethargy, and from henceforth live only for myself: I will heap together gold and riches, which shall make those about me cling to me, watch my very looks,—nay, worship me, if they do not love me."

Eleanor found the settling of her agent's accounts a longer business than she had at first anticipated; and all her household, with the exception of her own maid, had retired to rest before she had half completed it.

At length she discovered that a paper of great importance was missing, which she believed to be deposited in a drawer in her late father's favourite sitting room ; she took up one of the lamps which were burning on her writing-table, and telling her sleepy waiting-woman that she should not be long absent, left the room.

It was many weeks since she had quitted it ; and as she entered the long, dark, and deserted gallery, a cold and melancholy-sounding gust of wind blew down it, and chilled her to the heart. She had to pass by the room once occupied by poor Wenefrede : the door stood open, but all was dark and desolate within. Eleanor shuddered and walked quickly on. The paper was soon discovered, and Eleanor, after casting a hasty glance over the cold, melancholy-looking room, was about to return to her chamber

when she stopped suddenly to listen to a noise which appeared to proceed from the hall.

"Who can be there at this time of night?" she exclaimed, and her hand trembled violently as she tried to open the door; but summoning all the sternness of her nature to her aid, she at length threw it open, and with a stately step walked forward. She raised the lamp above her head, and looked around her—all was dark, cold, and silent as the grave; but as she suddenly turned the flickering light in the direction of the hearth, she started on perceiving a tall figure standing there.

Suppressing an exclamation of alarm, she demanded, in an imperious tone,—

"Who has dared to enter my hall at such an unseasonable hour of the night?"

"One that you love dearly: one that you

have to thank for being mistress of this hall, proud madam," exclaimed Trevor Owen, with a brutal laugh.

"Villain, miscreant, begone, and that instantly, or I will call up my servants, and send you to jail for murder," exclaimed Eleanor, in a voice of rage.

"You dare not, gentle cousin," replied Trevor Owen, in a triumphant voice: "I fear you not—I defy you, vixen as you are."

"I am innocent of my brother's death," said Eleanor, faintly.

"But who concealed his murderers? answer me that," said Trevor Owen, advancing several steps nearer to her. "Aye! and rewarded them with heaps of gold."

Eleanor sprang back towards the door by which she had entered, and screamed loudly for help; but Trevor Owen seizing her tightly

round the waist, placed his hand upon her mouth, and said,—

“For your own sake, Eleanor, do not scream. I have no wish to take away your life; but, by all that’s horrible, I swear that I will not swing alone. Listen to me,” he added, fiercely; “I will release you the instant you have taken a solemn oath to give me a hundred guineas. Do you hear, gentle cousin?”

He removed his hand from her quivering lips, and, with a voice tremulous alike from rage and fear, she took the oath.

“Amiable, humble-minded Eleanor!” said Trevor Owen, grinning like a hyena, “I will not trouble you to count out the gold to-night, for I have some companions waiting for me who might look upon it as no bad joke to save me the trouble of spending it; so forward it to-morrow to my old hiding-place in

Anglesea, and I will be there to receive it. And now, cousin Nell, good-night, and there's a parting kiss for you ;" and bursting out once more into a loud brutal laugh, he walked away.

Eleanor seized a spear from the wall and rushed after him, with what intention she hardly knew ; but he reached the entrance-door before her, and slammed it in her face ; and by the time she had summoned her servants he had escaped, and, aided by the darkness of the night, reached the boat that was waiting for him in safety.

Eleanor retired to her room, and threw herself on her bed, but she could not sleep : the wound her pride had received rankled very deep, and the dread that Trevor Owen might repeat his visit would alone have been sufficient to "banish sleep."

"Oh ! would that he were dead !" she exclaimed, clasping her feverish hands together.

"There will be no peace for me till he is in his grave."

Did not the fearful recollection that "there is no peace for the wicked" occur to her during that sleepless night?

About this period, Eleanor learned that Trevor Owen had connected himself with a set of smugglers in the Isle of Man; and dreading that he and his worthless associates might make an attack upon the house and murder her, she caused it to be barricaded day and night, as securely as if it had been a prison.

A year after Trevor Owen's last visit to the hall he was killed in a drunken broil by one of his companions; but this news never reached the ears of Eleanor, and her life was rendered miserable by the dread of his betraying, in a drunken fit, her knowledge of his crimes.

This led her to "dread the darkness, and yet loathe the light;" and after long years had passed, and she became convinced that he was dead, did she enjoy happiness? No; the judgment pronounced against Mount Seir appeared to have fallen upon her and the old hall.—"I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate."

Shunned by her neighbours, and dreaded by her dependants, Eleanor seemed only to derive pleasure from heaping up gold. As she advanced in years the more penurious did she grow; the greater her hatred of mankind; and the stronger her belief that all who approached her would wrong her if in their power.

Strange was the life she led; for although in good health, she never quitted the house. A "hateful, unsocial, friendless old age" was hers: yet still she lived on; but during the last year of her life her once-powerful mind

gave way, and she frequently accosted those about her by the name of Howel, and would give orders respecting the bridal dresses of her sister Wenefrede. She would sit for hours together in a high-backed chair in the centre of the hall; sometimes a smile of pride and exultation would light up her wasted and ghastly countenance, whilst at others a look of horror and despair, fearful to behold, would pass over it.

One afternoon towards the commencement of autumn she was seated in a bay window in the hall, on which the beams of the sun fell, when the entrance door was suddenly thrown open by a servant laden with turf for the fire; Eleanor started from her seat, and, with a trembling hand, shook her gold-headed cane at him, and exclaimed,—

“ Begone! begone! You are not Howel Llewelyn: you are no brother of mine. This

hall is mine: you are a vile impostor.—Begone! begone!"

The servant required no second order: he threw down his turf, and ran quickly away. An hour elapsed; but when Eleanor's waiting maid came to seek for her she found her a corpse.

Eleanor Llewelyn was the last of her noble line, and she was interred with much funeral pomp; but tears did not fall, nor were lamentations heard by the side of her coffin. The fine old Hall passed into the hands of a stranger, who possessed a magnificent seat in Yorkshire, and he allowed the pride of an old and noble race to fall to decay. And now

"The bat is clinging to those walls,
And the fox nestles in those halls,
Where once, in rich array,
Met lords, and knights, and ladies gay."

"The blaze of its hearth shall give welcome no more"
to the weary wanderer "or the needy petitioner," and the "grass has long waved where
the mead cup was poured."

THE END.

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